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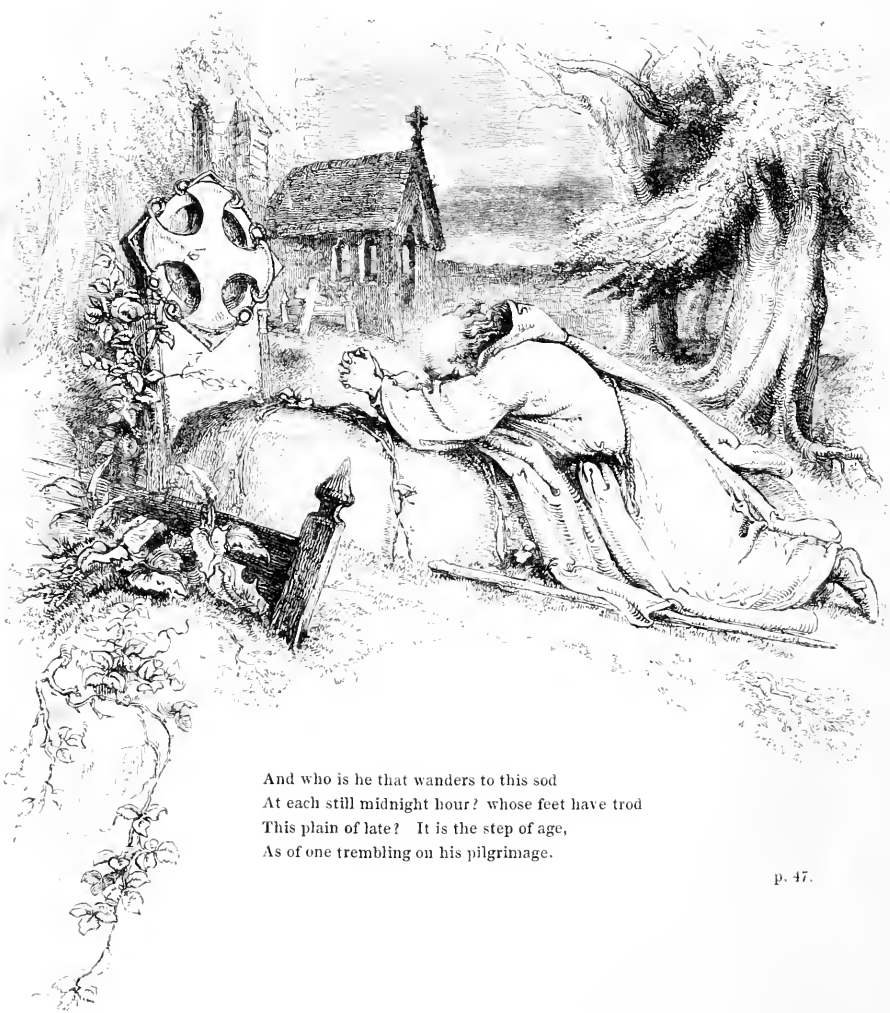
HEIMBURG;

And other Poems.

LONDON:  
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Great New Street and Fetter Lane.







And who is he that wanders to this sod  
At each still midnight hour? whose feet have trod  
This plain of late? It is the step of age,  
As of one trembling on his pilgrimage.

# HEIMBURG,

A Tale:

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

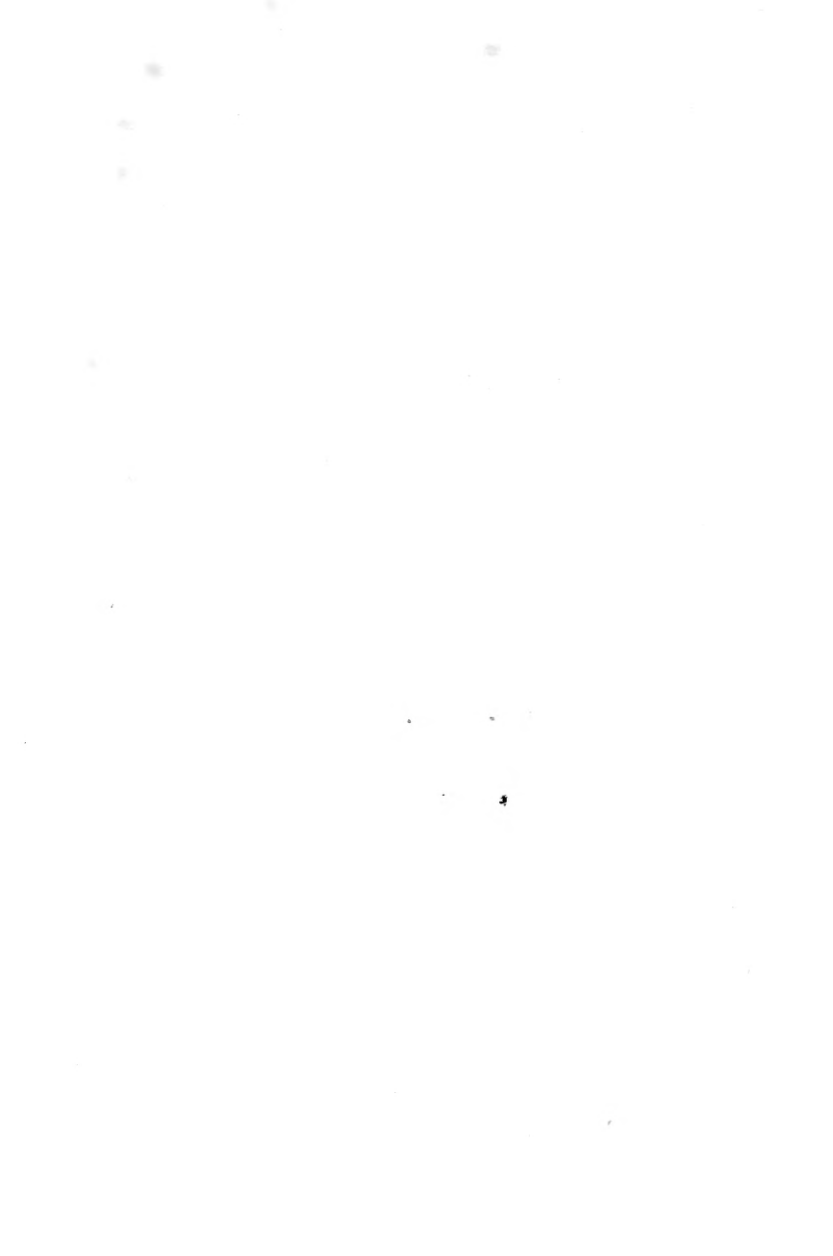
WILLIAM<sup>\*</sup> RICHARDS, JUN.

LONDON:

PRIVATELY PRINTED.

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## INTRODUCTION.



THERE are still to be seen on the banks of the Upper Rhine the remains of a castle called "Heimburg:" the following tale, which bears its name, was originally intended to relate the legend that attaches to its ruins. The manuscript, however, soon after its commencement, was laid aside in an unfinished state, and forgotten for some years ; and when at last it again saw the light, and its revision was determined on, and undertaken at distant intervals, I no longer cared to be bound to a subject of which I then had but a very indistinct recollection.

I must, therefore, advise my friends not to take me for their guide, if haply their wanderings should ever bring them, staff in hand, to that fallen pile, and should awaken a desire to recal, while reposing beneath its shade, the history of the lordly race who, in days gone by, revelled in pride and power there ; indeed, I must confess that, although I have retained the title first given to the poem, it might be difficult to discover in it now any feature of the legend which it once professed to record.

There is, perhaps, no river in Europe to which the wanderer from our own country in search of recreation more naturally turns than to the Rhine. To lovers of legendary lore, its monuments of feudal pride offer an endless source of interest and delight. On almost every dark mountain rising amidst fertile meads and clustering vines, from

the very brink of its waters, stand the ruins of some frowning battlement. Of many a noble pile, but a few crumbling walls remain ; while of others, massive towers and buttresses, spacious yet tenantless chambers, and the half-concealed "donjon-keep," bear an equally certain, though less appalling, testimony to the ravages of time.

Each particular castle is the theme of some wild and wondrous tradition ; of every town and hamlet some tale of love or chivalry is told. But the *reader* of a legend cannot duly appreciate it. It is when standing within the deserted halls, where once rang the sounds of gaiety and mirth,—when gazing upon the scene which speaks of splendour and magnificence gone by, that we most love to let our thoughts wander far, far back, and linger as in a dream around the past ;—then, as the tale falls from the lips of the uneducated shepherd or lowly peasant, in all the original simplicity with which it has been handed down from generation to generation, while pointing to the crumbling pile he tells of the hand that reared it, of the people who defended it, of the crime that destroyed it,—our hearts confess to emotions elsewhere unknown.

Of the poems translated from the German introduced in the following pages, I have lately heard that some have already appeared in English.

My only wonder is that this has not long since been the case with the whole of Uhland's works : without possessing the power of Schiller and Goethe, or the imagination of Hauff, the style of Uhland has a delicacy to which the former cannot always lay claim. As I have never seen any of these translations, I have not withheld my own version from this small volume.

The first manuscript of the principal tale bears date 1844, and the remaining subjects were written a year or two later. I certainly did not then anticipate that any of these lines would ever have taken their



present form. The simple apology I have now to offer is, that they are intended to reach the eye only of a few private friends, who have expressed a desire to peruse them; and from such, as I do not expect very severe judgment, there is perhaps no need to keep back that which has pleasantly occupied the thoughts of many a leisure hour.

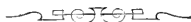
TOTTENHAM, *January* 1853.

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# HEIMBURG.

A Tale.



“HAIL to thee, Maiden! in thy bright eyes  
Who would not the cares of the morrow forget?  
In thy presence, Lady, each heart shall rise  
From its dreams of sorrow to ecstasy yet.

Oh, can there be found a fair region on earth  
Where happiness reigns unalloyed by a tear,—  
'Tis here, where each hour to new pleasures gives birth,  
And thy beauty unfolding makes friendship more dear.

Here ever the sweet sounds of music are stealing,  
Awakening the spirit to some fresh delight;  
For ever some hidden affection revealing,  
Some fire in the bosom more pure and more bright.

Here ever the stranger, when weary, is blest  
With repose from the storm and the wintry wind;  
And the trembling vassal, by foemen oppress'd,  
Doth, within thy walls welcomed, a refuge find.

Then a health to thee, Lady ! in battle's fierce strife  
Thy name shall our watchword to victory be ;  
And the heart of each warrior, in death as in life,  
Shall hold dearest of all the remembrance of thee !"

Such was the strain which oft in happier days  
A thousand voices were prepared to raise  
From Heimburg's walls, while a continued song  
Burst from the lips of the approving throng ;  
Such were the feelings that inspired the breast,  
In days gone by, of each rejoicing guest  
At the proud banquet ; when the blushing maid,  
Heimburg's fair child, in spotless white arrayed,  
Graced with her smile the feast, where every soul  
Forgot its sorrow in the foaming bowl.

Within this pile there dwelt a man whose life,  
Spent amidst scenes of lawlessness and strife,  
Now glided smoothly on, untarnished yet  
By deeds that called for weeping or regret.  
Of noble birth, descended from a name  
Proudly enrolled upon the scroll of fame,  
There was a spell, a firm but grateful band,  
That bound him to his home,—his fatherland.  
Long had his country groaned beneath a chain  
A despot forged ;—her sons had bled in vain :  
No link was riven ; still the iron hand  
Stretched forth its sceptre o'er the enslaved land,  
And to its will each heart was forced to yield,  
Or die, an offering on the battle-field.

No arm was there to avenge a tyrant's curse :  
Some bowed before him in the dust,— or worse,  
With the false garb of friendship, for a time  
Became his flatterers, shared his gold and crime.  
And man sank into sluggishness, and wept  
His wrongs in silence, or unconscious slept ;

And heedless of his woes, forgot that he,  
Roused from his lethargy, might yet be free.  
Upon each chieftain's brow there lay a gloom  
Which seemed the sad forerunner of their doom ;  
Yet as they met when wandering to and fro,  
Ere the glad hour had come to strike the blow  
That was to lay the haughty tyrant low,  
The sudden start, the whispering that fell  
From the pale quivering lip, appeared to tell  
That in each breast was fauned the glimmering flame  
Of freedom's torch, of hatred to his name.

Once more behold his camp upon the field  
Where oft his foes have been compelled to yield ;  
Where thrice a thousand hearts in deadly strife  
Have bled for freedom,—sweeter yet than life ;  
Yearning for liberty they held so dear,  
And winning nothing, save a comrade's tear,  
Or a frail monument to tell how they  
Poured forth their life's blood on that fatal day.  
The morning dawns ! from many a wood-crowned height  
Heimburg leads forth his warriors to the fight ;  
Upon the cold damp sod they knelt, and there  
Rose from the armed host the voice of prayer.  
'Twas but a moment ! See, in dense array,  
Yon hireling legions eager for the fray !  
Fierce raged the strife ; upon the battle-plain  
Ere long were strewed the bleeding and the slain ;  
And when the sun his wonted race had run,  
Their chief was vanquished, and the victory won.

Low on the earth, on that eventful day,  
The country's scourge, the dying despot, lay ;  
With throbbing heart, and life's blood ebbing slow,  
With sullen look he gazed upon the foe.  
He saw the banner he had borne before  
Proudly on high, sink, to be raised no more,

Save to enhance the triumphs of a band  
Freed from the terror of his ruthless hand.  
His head drooped low ; the film of death came o'er  
The eye whose look was life or death before ;  
In vain that cry !—No friend to wipe his brow,  
No voice to whisper consolation now !  
Scarce shall a slave be found to bear away  
The blood-stained remnant of his guilty clay ;—  
Of all bereft,—once more in death he sighed,  
He heard the shout of victory, and died !

Vain were indeed man's best attempts to trace  
The founder, Heimburg, of thy noble race,—  
To tell the hand that raised each hoary stone,  
Till thy dark pile stood frowning and alone ;  
Though many rumours oft are heard abroad,—  
Legends that whisper of an unknown lord,  
Of courtly mien, who planned thy wide domain,  
And freed with gold each serf from slavery's chain.  
And oft a story to the stranger's ear  
Is told by those who fear to venture near,  
How that in days gone by, one wandered o'er  
The silent wastes and yet unpeopled shore,  
To seek a land untenanted, whose sod  
No eye had seen, no mortal foot had trod,  
That he might shun each step, each human trace,  
And find in solitude a resting-place.  
Some whispered softly, that one chief alone,  
With hand scarce mortal, had hewn out each stone ;  
On deeds of love and chivalry intent,  
Had reared, unaided, the proud battlement !

And now,—though since that unforgotten day  
Race after race had lived and died away,  
And many a name that once was wont to boast  
Its ancient lineage, was hidden, lost,—  
There still was one who yet possessed a claim  
To Heimburg's race,—the last that bore his name

Year followed year, the stream of time rolled on ;  
His sires, some scarce remembered now, were gone ;  
And in his walls a tablet told the day  
That saw them swept by death's stern hand away.  
They lived and died beneath a bygone time,  
When deeds of ruthlessness or secret crime,  
And blood, spilt heedlessly by many a hand,  
Drew down a curse upon their fatherland ;  
When petty quarrels urged each noble knight,  
Of wrongs scarce conscious, to the fatal fight,  
Where crowds of followers, whom they scarcely heed,  
With one must conquer, and for both must bleed.  
Was there no offering left ? could life alone  
Atone for slighted honour ? did none own  
A secret pang, as o'er their breathless foe  
With unsheathed blade the conquerors stood ?—Oh no !  
The deed is done ;—their hands have wiped away  
Some fancied stain, some trifle of a day :  
Rumour hath told their victory, and they claim  
Of neighbouring chiefs new homage to their name.  
Warm tears of bitterness,—the thought of bliss  
Their pride had spoiled, was nought compared with this !  
When mingling in the feud, their deepening hate  
Dreamt not of hearts soon to be desolate ;  
And flushed with conquest, they remembered not  
The unfelt misery of the mourner's lot ;  
A maiden's weeping, and an orphan's sigh,  
They heard unmoved, or passed in silence by !

Scarce was a lordly hall in that dark time  
Free from the stain of many a hidden crime ;  
Scarce was a dwelling found which could not tell  
A tale of woe,—how some in secret fell  
Who for long years, bound with a torturing chain,  
Had sighed for liberty, alas ! in vain,  
And with their wanderings worn away the sod  
On which each day their weary feet had trod ;  
While the rude walls beheld them, in despair,  
Seek for an opening for a sunbeam there !

Oft when death came, there was no tongue to tell  
To kindred ears how cruelly they fell ;  
Few asked their fate, and never stone or cross  
Recalled their name, or bade man mourn their loss :  
The hand that slew them dug their narrow grave,  
Or dashed their reeking bodies to the wave,  
Tainting the peaceful stream and the cold flood  
With its dark crimes, and with its victim's blood.

There was one race, apart from all, whose name  
Mourn'd not this guilt, this ruthlessness, this shame ;  
There was one pile within whose dungeon-keep  
No guiltless prisoner e'er sat down to weep :  
In times of need its lord was ever near,—  
The first to dry, the last to cause a tear.  
At peace with all, his once-stained blade now lay,  
To await the terrors of some future day :  
He wished not war ; yet knew he that his hand  
Would never shrink to avenge or save his land.  
Courteous and kind, no heart oppressed with grief  
E'er told its tale, and asked in vain relief :  
His ear was open to his people's prayer ;  
His home,—to all who sought a refuge there ;  
The meanest serf that wandered through the land  
Confessed some boon bestowed at his command.  
He, when benighted, in those halls could find  
A roof to shield him from the wintry wind ;  
If hungry ever, by that warm hearth's side  
His wants were stayed,—his hunger satisfied.  
With many a gift that chief had ever blest  
The weary footsteps of a humble guest ;  
And while around him men were hated, feared,  
Heimburg was loved,—to each, to all endeared !

---



'Twas eventide,—and all was hushed,  
And silent was the hum of day ;  
The distant mountain's brow yet blushed  
Beneath the setting sun's bright ray,  
While, far below, the swelling stream  
Reflected his last, lingering beam.  
But soon its tender hue was gone,—  
Illuming the still vale no more,  
And the smooth waters flowing on  
Lost the gay look they wore before.  
Scarce was a skiff now seen to glide  
Across the clear unruffled tide ;  
Scarce did a gentle zephyr play  
Around the rugged shores, where long,  
Upon the mountain-breeze away,  
Had floated many a lover's song.  
The vesper-hymn each voice had sung,  
And o'er the drooping flowers hung  
The dew of heaven, while scarce was heard  
The warbling of a lonely bird.  
The distant tinkling of the bell,  
The low of cattle wandering near,  
The rippling water, as it fell,  
Mellowed upon the listening ear :  
Two streamlets murmuring side by side,—  
This all hushed in the eventide !

There was a group at that still hour,  
Within a lonesome fragrant bower,  
Hard by the castle's loftiest tower.  
Upon a couch with moss o'ergrown  
Sat Heimburg's lord, who oft would leave  
His frowning pile, and seek alone  
Its tranquil shade at dewy eve.  
Around his high and manly brow  
Played his long locks of silvery hair,  
And the deep trace of years was now  
Graven in many a furrow there.

He mused in silence on the past,—  
Those unforgotten, joyous days,  
Which, like the setting sun, now cast  
Around his path their evening rays;  
And as a dream before his brain  
Rose up their fairest scenes again.  
Still oftentimes would he recall,  
In thought, those hours, brightest of all,  
When, as a youth, who scarce had seen  
The sun of twenty summers rise,  
A maiden, once, of gentle mien,  
Of the high tournament the queen,  
With beating heart and tearful eyes  
Had watched him, though a stripling yet,  
Ride foremost in the armèd crowd,  
Where courtly knights and nobles met  
To win a chaplet—or a shroud!  
Ah! well she knew that his bright blade  
Had often clashed in deadly strife,  
That many a humbled foe had prayed,  
While yet the uplifted arm was stayed,—  
Prostrate beneath his feet,—for life.  
But though upon the battle plain,  
Where danger was, his plume waved high,  
Each haughty noble with disdain  
Had passed the youthful warrior by,  
When in the lists, with glance as free  
And mien as bold, he sought to vie  
In prouder deeds of chivalry.  
It mattered not ;—with glowing breast,  
A hundred followers at his call,  
In the gay throng an envied guest,  
He watched unmoved each festival.  
But why this morn doth he no more  
Amidst those high-born dames appear,  
Nor gladden, as in days of yore,  
With courteous words their listening ear?  
A thousand maids, with laughing eyes,  
Beneath Helvetia's sunny skies

Are gathered now; and at their side  
 The noblest chieftains of the land,  
 In all magnificence and pride,  
 Impatient for the combat stand.  
 Is *he* not here whose youthful fame  
 Hath risen o'er many a warrior's name?  
 He whose young deeds the minstrel's lay  
 Hath told in halls far, far away?  
 See, yon fair maid of high degree,  
 With blushing cheek, her brow hath bent:  
 She asks if Heimburg's lord will be  
 Spectator of the tournament.

SPECTATOR!—no. She who hath known  
 His voice from childhood's earliest hours;  
 Whose mantling lip delights to own  
 How artlessly, for her alone,  
 His hand then culled the fairest flowers;  
 She who, though childhood's days are fled,  
 Lives in his thoughts, and o'er his will—  
 Impetuous, wayward once,—doth shed  
 A sweet and holy influence still;  
 Who oft is wont to kneel with him  
 And breathe, as evening falls, her prayer;  
 Who weeps if e'er his eye grows dim  
 With sorrow which she may not share;  
 She whom he loves with that fond love,  
 That ardent yearning of the mind,  
 Which deep within his heart, above  
 All else, her image hath enshrined;—  
 Sits high amidst yon bright array,  
 Rich jewels glitter on her brow,  
 And at her throne proud courtiers pay  
 Unfeignedly their homage now.  
 Of all most beauteous, she hath been  
 Chosen to-day with one consent,  
 By thrice a thousand voices, queen  
 Of the gay feast and tournament:

The prize to yield with her fair hand,  
Worthy the noblest of the land ;  
With gentle words to speak his praise  
Who, victor in the fight, should raise  
That hand to his fond lips, and deem  
New bliss foreshadowed in the dream !  
What ! shall another bear away  
That proudest trophy of the day ?  
Another glory in her glance,  
Once given, then felt and loved for ever,  
While Heimburg's lord can wield a lance,  
Or curb his fiery war-steed ?—Never !

Already in the lists are seen,  
With beaver raised and lance in hand,  
Four combatants of noble mien,  
The haughtiest warriors of the land :  
There Ehrenstein, whose knightly word  
A thousand followers obey ;  
Elfeldt and Teck, and Arnheim's lord,  
Await the signal for the fray.  
For far away, where, a young stream,  
The Rhone its ice-bound rocks doth lave ;  
There too, where in the sun's bright beam  
Its waters mingle with the wave,  
Hath rumour told how all may be  
Partakers of the revelry.  
And many a southern Ritter's gaze  
Is fixed on her, whose beauty long  
Hath been the subject of his praise,  
The theme of every banquet-song.  
He for her smile hath left his hall,  
Eager for each frail breath of fame ;  
Or, winning none, content to fall,  
So he may speak in death her name !

Seasons had come and passed away  
Since their heart's-blood the arena dyed,

Yet, fresh the memory of the day  
When Heimburg, 'midst that proud array,  
    Knelt low before his beauteous bride,  
And claimed, as victor in the strife,  
The boon he sweeter deemed than life.

'Tis a bright dream, for she is near,  
    The subject of his reverie ;—  
'Tis past, for now upon his ear  
The voice he ever loved to hear—  
    In youth, in age—broke tenderly.

Two ladies sat beside him there,  
    Fair inmates of the fragrant bower ;  
And, lost in thought, each seemed to share  
    The sweet repose of that still hour.  
One told more years : upon her cheek  
    The eye could trace that holier bliss,  
Which blesseth never those who seek  
    Its pure springs in a world like this.  
Her look was calm, as though her heart  
    No lingering thought of ill had known,  
But cherished hopes which could impart  
    Peace, flowing not from earth alone :  
Her placid brow bespoke a mind  
    To humble adoration given,  
A spirit wont to cast behind  
    The things that savoured not of heaven.  
Such, too, appeared her beauteous child,  
Whose rosy lips for ever smiled.  
Hail ! hail to thee, fair Ida ! thou,  
    Thy country's pride, may'st yet be gay :  
Ne'er may aught cloud thy joyous brow,  
    Or sorrow chase thy smile away !  
Of the wide world her guileless breast  
    But little knew ; each woody dell  
And verdant mead for her possessed  
    A softer charm, a deeper spell !

Her pleasure was, 'midst fragrant flowers,  
To tread alone each silent grove,  
Where often, in the careless hours  
Of childhood, she had loved to rove.  
All o'er her spotless bosom strayed  
Rich guardian locks of auburn hair,  
And never fairy's tresses played  
Around a neck than hers more fair :  
Her glance resembled the kind star  
Whose rays light up the wintry night ;  
But since that shineth from afar,  
Her smile methought was yet more bright.

The knight looked down and calmly eyed  
The smooth and almost sleeping tide,  
Scarce murmuring on the shore ;  
While noiselessly, from side to side,  
Anon some wanderer's bark would glide  
The unruffled waters o'er.  
And oft, as though he feared to break  
The unwonted stillness of the stream,  
Or cared not rudely to awake  
The waters from their tranquil dream,  
The boatman rested on the oar  
That he had gaily plied before,  
And listened to the evening bell,  
As, from the distant hamlet borne,  
Its lingering echo seemed to swell  
Upon the gentle breeze, and mourn  
With a sad note, a plaintive lay,  
The memory of the bygone day.

Oh, music hath a magic power  
To still the surgings of the breast—  
To soothe, when inward tempests lower,  
The passions of the mind to rest !  
Yet, would thine eager spirit feel  
Its holiest influence—wouldst thou be

A listener when its notes reveal  
Their purest, sweetest melody,—  
Oh, deem not that thy feet must roam  
Far off with the impatient crowd,  
Until beneath some gilded dome,  
Where priests have knelt or kings have bowed,  
Thou should'st behold, in deep array,  
The best devices which man's hand,  
To celebrate some holiday,  
Had gathered there from every land,  
And on thy wondering ear should fall,  
Combined, the harmony of all !  
No ! seek thou some secluded dell,  
Let thy feet tread the shaded vale,  
When, from afar, the evening bell  
Tells solemnly its wonted tale  
Of passing moments, calling men  
From labour to repose again ;  
When, ere its sound hath died away,  
Around thee grateful voices raise,  
With one consent, their humble lay,  
Their hymn of love, their song of praise !  
Then shall thy waiting spirit own  
A charm before unfelt, unknown ;  
And thy rejoicing heart confess  
Such notes have magic power to bless !

One lone and solitary lute  
Upon the stream was not yet mute ;  
Faintly the wanderer's peaceful strain  
Thus echoed from its shores again :—

“ There is a friendly star, whose genial ray  
Doth cheer earth's darkest night ;  
And when, beclouded, others die away,  
This seems most bright.

“ The monarch’s palace, and the exile’s home  
Beyond the deep blue sea,  
Drink in its beams ;—where’er thy footsteps roam  
Its light will be.

“ In space it wanders not : ’tis not a star  
That blesses with its ray  
Our lonely earth, again to hasten far  
Away—away !

“ Clouds dim it not ; in darkness it doth beam  
With rays serene and clear :  
Oh ! if its light were shrouded, all would seem  
Most cold and drear.

“ Know’st thou the star that on this world of ours  
Beameth like those above ?  
That is to man what sunshine is to flowers ?—  
’Tis woman’s love !”

The ladies, who had listened long  
To the soft music of the strain,  
And onwards strayed, as though the song  
Might haply reach their ear again,  
Now sought—for all was hushed—the knight,  
With wavering step, with eye less bright ;  
And while his heart new joy confessed,  
That his first love, his spouse, was near,  
The gentle heaving of her breast,  
The sigh, the half-concealèd tear,  
Seemed to reveal some hidden care,  
Or sorrow, which he sought to share.  
And lest to her lord’s watchful glance,  
Or to her child, the tear that fell  
From her pale eye-lid should enhance  
The mournful tale her lips would tell,  
Soon, with voice faltering as she spoke,  
The lady thus the silence broke :—



“ Not oft is it to mortals given  
To know the hour when they must be  
Called from this earth to yon high heaven,  
To dwell there everlastingly ;  
But as at eve I mused, and deemed  
All still around, no stranger near,  
I saw the form of one who seemed  
A messenger from that bright sphere.  
I scarce knew why my tears fell fast,  
Save with deep awe ; for as she cast  
Her veil aside, her radiant face  
Told of a being from above ;  
And in those eyes—oh, I could trace  
The spring of purity and love !  
She was a spirit, for her wings  
Bore witness to her heavenly birth ;  
And in her lowliest murmurings  
Was melody too sweet for earth !  
And suddenly a beam of light,  
Like the first rising of the sun,  
Burst in upon my wondering sight—  
But, oh ! ’twas purer and more bright,  
For she was light it shone upon !  
Low on my couch I hid my brow,  
And with gaze half averted, thus  
I whispered softly, ‘ Who art thou,  
Fair creature ? ’ Yet so tremulous  
Were the first words I dared to speak,  
That when I looked again, a smile  
Came stealing o’er her holy cheek,  
Such as could all my fear beguile.  
Oh, ne’er did creature born of earth  
Such magic influence possess !  
Ne’er did a face of mortal birth  
Glow with such love, such tenderness !  
To none of lowlier race than Heaven  
Could such a winning smile be given ;  
None but a sinless cheek could wear  
A blush so pure, a hue so fair !

Her lips were moving, and I heard  
A gentle voice ;—'twas as the sound  
Of angels whispering ;—at each word  
There was a fragrance breathed around,  
Sweeter than ever forest-flower  
Sent forth to greet the sun's first beam :  
Yet—yet I feel it ; oh, that hour !  
How vivid still its pleasures seem !  
Up to my couch she came, and thus  
She spoke in accents tremulous,  
While on my brow she laid a hand,  
Whose snowy spotlessness was such,  
That even the fairest of her land  
Would not have shrunk beneath its touch :

“ ‘ Fear not !—not oft these feet have trod  
Before this earth's unhallowed sod ;  
These lips were not ordained to speak  
To mortal ears a tale of woe,—  
These eyes, to gaze upon a cheek  
Regardless of its tears—oh, no !  
Ere long the charms earth once possessed  
Shall fade before thee—shall be o'er ;  
Its transient pleasures soon thy breast,  
Its sufferings too, shall know no more.  
Look up ! I tell thee of a sphere  
Where all is brighter, nobler yet ;  
Where weeps no eye, where flows no tear,  
Where is no sorrow, no regret !  
Doubt not the message, lady ; here  
The witness to its truth I bear ;  
This sign shall banish all thy fear,  
And make thee long to live elsewhere ! ’

“ She spoke, and round her brow there played  
A flame so radiant, that it seemed  
As though she were in light arrayed ;  
While suddenly her bright eyes beamed

With such a look, that almost I  
Wished to be like her—wished to die.  
I longed to clasp her; 'twas too late;

She vanished, and I saw her not.  
Without her, oh, how sad my fate!

How dark, how desolate my lot!  
Awhile I slept: the morning's dawn  
Found me forsaken and forlorn.  
I sought to trace her form again;

Perchance, I thought, she lingereth yet,—  
But, no! to join her holier train,  
She'd left this earth, and I in vain

Essayed her absence to forget.  
“Thou weepest, child! Oh, why those sighs?  
Chase, chase the tear-drops from thine eyes!  
Thou wilt not long be lonely here  
When I am gone;—see, one is near  
To assuage thy grief: thy father's kiss  
Shall soothe thy mourning into bliss!”

She turned to him, whose gloomy brow  
Confessed to care and sorrow now.  
He too had listened and had heard,  
And pondered each foreboding word,  
And like his spouse, alas! could see  
Throughout, a gleam of prophecy.  
The ladies rose, and with him went  
Towards Heimburg's frowning battlement.  
Soon all was still: the pale moon shone  
Upon the bower, but they were gone.

---

It is the hour when fairies weave,  
With skilful hand, their magic wreath,  
When they descend to seek the flowers  
With which to deck their airy bowers:  
'Tis midnight, and the forest trees  
Scarce bend before the gentle breeze.

Beneath the castle's lofty porch,  
On high is fixed a flaming torch ;  
Deep red and black it fiercely blends,  
And slowly its thick smoke ascends  
As a dark column in the air,  
Like a foul spirit hovering there !  
Around the porch a robe is flung,  
And the huge gates are loosely hung  
With that dread hue which oft hath spoken,  
And told the heart already broken,  
That now from earth some wonted guest  
Hath passed away and is at rest.

Beside a couch in yon dark chamber, see,  
One leaneth who, in silent reverie,  
Through the long weary night hath lingered there  
As in a dream ; the anguish of despair,  
Methinks, is traced upon his wasted brow.  
Who is this mourner ? Heinburg ! is it thou ?  
Ah, yes ! He looks upon her lifeless clay,  
Whom death's relentless hand hath borne away,  
And with a bursting heart he bows his head  
Upon the form before him cold and dead. .  
He cannot leave her. Oh, in pity, spare  
The consolation that he seeketh there ;—  
This—that a passing moment more he may  
Weep o'er the remnant of a happier day.

He saw the flowing golden tresses  
Low drooping o'er that pallid brow,  
Which oft had blushed at his caresses,—  
Alas ! unconscious of them now.  
Those lips, whose accents ever fell  
Like heavenly music on his ear,  
Each joy to heighten,—to dispel  
In sorrow each intruding fear,—  
Were still in death ; the lustre gone  
From the pale cheek he gazed upon !

Soon a fair girl, whose voice had been  
 Awhile unheard,—herself unseen,  
 So soft her step,—on bended knee,  
 Aroused him from his reverie :  
 The eye could scarce discern her face,  
     Beneath her long dishevelled hair,  
 Yet, as she knelt, could ever trace  
     Bright gleams of radiant beauty there.  
 The maiden kissed her father's cheek,  
 As silently they turned to seek  
 The couch once more ; and, lingering, cast  
 Yet one deep glance—the dearest—last !  
 Clinging, 'midst tears she could not hide,  
 More closely to the mourner's side,  
 With gentle words she led him on,  
 Away from the departed one.

O'er the castle's dark grey towers  
     Shrieks again the ill-omened bird,  
 While in less sad or gloomy hours  
     Its note of woe was never heard.  
 What means this cry ? What means this torch,  
 Illuming still the sombre porch ?  
 What means this crowd of armed men,—  
 The impatient steeds in yonder glen ?  
 Upon a stone beneath a tree  
 A maiden sits apart, and she  
 Feels her young heart o'erflow with grief—  
 With a first woe that mocks relief.  
 A stalwart knight beside her stands,  
 And clasps in his her trembling hands ;  
 And now they mingle with the throng  
     Of humble vassals, who, intent  
 On the last deeds of love, have long  
     Encircled Heimburg's battlement.  
 The mourning cavalcade is gone,  
     With wavering step and sad array ;  
 Tears dim the eyes yet fixed upon  
     Her whom all loved, thus borne away.

An hour has passed ;—no more is heard  
The cry of the ill-omened bird ;  
No more the murmur of the crowd  
Is echoed from the silent vale ;  
And night beneath her sable shroud  
Hath wrapped in darkness hill and dale.  
All is not dark.—In yon high tower  
Light glimmers yet ! a feeble ray  
From a rude lamp, which scarce hath power  
To chase the deepening gloom away.  
And who are they that linger there ?  
Whose presence doth thy glance reveal ?  
Tread lightly ! side by side, in prayer,  
Father and child together kneel !

---

The crowd of guests hath died away  
That flocked to Heimburg's hoary walls,  
Whose song turned darkness into day  
Within those flower-hung banquet-halls ;  
The mirthful strain that once was heard  
Is now to other scenes transferred.  
The vassals, wearied of each day,  
Too often sleep their hours away,  
Or pacing sullenly along,  
Mutter their low half-spoken song ;  
And whisperings told that now their lord,  
Whose smile no more should be restored,  
His couch would leave in the still night,  
And hasten forth to a lone grave,  
And kneeling there till morning light,  
Would with his tears the cold sod lave.  
The festive song, the harp's soft strain,  
No more possessed a charm for him ;  
'Twas said that o'er his throbbing brain  
The light of reason ne'er again  
Should burn, or beam with rays but dim ;

And oft, for many a long sad day,  
The knight would wander far away  
From child and home, in forests rude  
To live and weep in solitude.

There was yet one who loved to be  
In Heimburg's silent halls a guest ;  
Who held them dearer than when he,  
Amid the sound of revelry,

Had felt a thrill within his breast  
Of pride and joy, that none could claim  
Of all the throng a brighter fame  
Than that which heralded his name.  
What draws his footsteps thus away  
From Staufen for so many a day ?  
Once, ever leading on the chase,

He rode throughout his wide domain ;  
His eye could track each hiding-place,

Nor ever sought the prey in vain.  
But now 'twould seem he cared no more  
For the wild haunts whence oft of yore,  
Foremost of all the eager throng,  
Had echoed loud his hunting-song,  
While his shrill blast scarce served to guide  
His breathless followers to his side.

What is it that, in other halls,

Hath cast of late around his lot  
A radiance which within his walls

The proudest banquet offers not ?  
'Tis Heimburg's child !—it is those eyes  
That to him seem so dear a prize.  
She was the star whose soft bright beam

Lit in his soul the sacred flame  
Which sheds o'er every minstrel's theme

Its hallowing influence—Love its name.

Yes, sweet indeed the evening hour,

Might he but hear her gentle voice,  
Who, 'midst each scene of pride and power,  
Had ever bade his heart rejoice

With hopes that none had dared to own  
And treasure up but he alone.  
To win her smile, to woo her kiss,  
Oh, where was happiness like this ?  
A joy so ardent and so pure  
His breast had never known before ;  
Welcomed as one beloved by her,  
Each word, each look, the harbinger  
Of future bliss,—oh, there was none  
On the wide earth he deemed so fair ;  
She stood alone—an angel—one  
Whose love it was his heaven to share.

If, hapless lover, o'er thy lot  
The smile thou seekest beameth not,—  
Which, kindly given, were to thee  
Thy guide unerring, the fair gem  
Whose rays should light thy path, and be  
Brightest in all life's diadem ;—  
She whom thy soul can ne'er forget  
May hear thy voice with gladness yet.  
As falls the grateful summer shower  
Upon the half-closed forest flower,  
So sink thy words ;—too soon each trace  
The breeze, the sunbeam can efface.  
But as beneath some drooping leaf  
A dew-drop lingers, so her heart  
Unconsciously hath known thy grief,  
And will ere long sweet hope impart  
To thy glad breast ;—yet breathe once more  
The vows thou oft hast told before,  
Soon she may feel what thou hast felt,  
When thou low at her feet hast knelt ;  
Yes ! she will turn, thy love shall be  
To her all that hers is to thee.



## II.

## Scene in Gaul.

THE smiling summer came ;—joyful and gay  
Its advent seemed to all ;—soon its bright trace  
Revived the fruitful and the barren place,  
And chased the lingering winter's snow away.  
For short had been its glad forerunner, spring ;  
The birds that had returned from far were seen  
Seeking in vain for trees of wonted green  
Whereon to rest them, as on eager wing  
They hastened home from their long wandering.  
Around the snow-clad hills of Gaul were curled  
The wintry mists, when, like a sudden light  
Expelling all, clear, radiant, and bright,  
The sun, a herald from another world,  
Burst forth afresh, and shed his genial rays  
O'er height and vale, giving to man the boon  
He had so long desired ;—he listened soon  
Not to the howling wind, but to the lays  
Of the soft zephyrs, to which once more earth,  
Refreshed again and half-renewed, gave birth.

Soon strife broke out afresh ;—the restless soul  
Seeks not the ease that opulence can give.  
The song, the wine that sparkles in the bowl,  
Bids the gay worldling or the madman live :  
But men familiar with the battle-plain  
Falsely imagine that there lurks some stain  
Yet unavenged ;—they deem some shade once cast  
Upon their honour or upon their name  
Doth cloud it still, and cause their shame to last,  
Making more arduous their path to fame.  
This spurs them on to rise, and cast behind  
All thoughts of peace, for war is far more kind.

*That* heals no wound ; revenge, a hidden throe,  
Yet gnaws the bosom, lurks insatiate there :  
But war doth oft behold the dying foe  
Weltering in blood, expiring in despair  
Beneath the avenger's feet ; his stained sword  
Doth please him better than confession's word.

Whose voices mingle on yon Gallic plain ?  
What means this angry tumult ? See ! again  
Are scattered round the dying and the slain ;  
Maimed and disfigured heaps, that no more feel  
The wounds man gave, but which he cannot heal,  
With those that gasp convulsively, whose breath  
Brings with each groan the agonies of death.  
Ah ! hostile man hath met, his hand hath dyed  
Earth's once pure garment with a crimson tide.  
There the Gaul lieth, and revenge is traced

Darkening, as with a cloud, his sullen brow ;  
Helvetia's blood were nectar to his taste,—

It were a balm, a solace to him now.  
Fain would he barter for one moment's power  
The failing strength of life's last weary hour,  
So for that moment, with reviving breath,  
His eye might revel 'midst new scenes of death !  
Yet ere the blade he grasps can reach the foe,  
Nerveless, enfeebled, his proud arm sinks low ;  
And in his parched throat a rattling sound  
Tells that he too is like the heaps around.  
And thus man follows man,—the groans become  
Less loud and frequent as each meets his doom !

Days, weeks, roll swiftly on, and peace again  
Blesses alike the village and the plain ;  
Once more the busy serf pursues his way  
Where the fierce foemen stood in dense array,  
And with the blade he needs no more to wield,  
Now turns the sod upon the battle-field.  
The strife is o'er ;—beneath a spreading tree  
There sits a knight,—who may this stranger be ?

He seemeth lost in thought ; his manly brow  
Rests on his hand, and that doth tremble now.  
Know'st thou him not ? though changed, 'tis yet the same ;  
'Tis he, the last of Heimburg's noble name.  
His band hath died before the Gallic host,  
Courting no longer life, with freedom lost ;  
And he, their leader, thinks upon the day  
When on the blood-stained plain his warriors lay ;  
He broods upon his woes, that he of all  
Alone is left to weep his country's fall.

Hard by that scene of rapine and of blood  
Roared a fierce mountain-torrent ; its cold flood  
Swept through a frowning wilderness, where stood  
A solitary unfrequented wood.  
Deep in its gloomy shade a trace was seen  
Of some proud battlement that once had been  
Long years before ; and many a crumbling stone,  
Rent in ungainly fragments, seemed to own,  
With silent truth, its pristine glory gone.  
Across the waste and long-deserted plain,  
Which, traversed once, few cared to seek again,  
There was a path, whose rough and dreary sod  
For many a day scarce mortal foot had trod ;  
With loathsome weeds and rankest flowers o'ergrown,  
'Twas left unheeded, and almost unknown.

A tramp is heard, as of the war-steed's tread,  
Echoed from yonder torrent's rocky bed.  
What meaneth this ?—what madman thus would dare  
To seek that path, to venture singly there ?  
'Tis but an idle dream. No ! see, a steed  
Bounds o'er the mountain with resistless speed ;  
The spur is buried in his panting side,  
And now he dashes in the foaming tide,  
Breathless he struggles, and regains the shore ;  
On hastes the serf more rashly than before,—  
The wood is left behind,—the vassal nears  
The downcast knight ;—his deep-drawn sighs he hears.

Unseen, he bound his war-steed to a tree  
That grew hard by, then sank on bended knee  
Before his lord, who, lost in reverie,  
Now raised the head that had long drooped so low :  
Was it a friend he looked upon, or foe ?  
“ Balthasar ! ” murmured he, while o’er his brow  
The wrinkles deepened ; “ dream I ? is it thou ?  
Or doth this breast, that grief hath driven mad,—  
This soul, that once discerning powers had,—  
Wander again, and fancy it can see  
Another’s image, stranger, traced in thee ? ”

The vassal paused awhile :—a word procured  
The hearing that no other had ensured :  
“ Heimburg ! ” escaped his lips ; yet, as he spoke,  
His trembling voice scarce the sad stillness broke :  
“ Deep is the import of the words I bear,  
And dark the truth thy vassal must declare ;  
Yet, by the sacred image that I wear,  
I pledged myself to find thee, and to break  
The secret to thee, for thine honour’s sake ! ”

“ Hold ! ” cried the knight, and chased away a tear ;  
“ Yet, no—say on—the worst I can but hear.  
Haply my child is sick, or even now  
Rests the pale garb of death upon her brow !  
Say, is it this that brings thee hither, slave ?  
Or doth thy message bid me draw this glaive  
In strife again ? this hand can wield it yet :  
See’st thou its hue ? with Gallie blood ’twas wet ! ”

The serf hung down his head ; within him died  
His inmost spirit, as he low replied :  
“ Ida of Heimburg lives ! would that the tale  
These lips must tell were of the mourners’ wail  
For one departed hence—of warm tears shed  
Around the narrow dwelling of the dead !  
Not thus thy slave had faltered had this hand  
Turned the cold sod, and in a distant land

Borne silently to her lone resting-place  
Thy child, the last, the fairest of her race.  
A weary stranger, wandering on his way,  
With courteous voice prayed that he might delay  
Within thy walls a few short hours, and share  
The hospitality thou grantest there :  
He wore a pilgrim's garb, and seemed to be  
Unused to war, a foe to chivalry ;  
Yet, as he blessed thy child, his haughty glance  
Thy warder saw, and whispered that perchance  
A heart beat in that bosom which had not  
Chosen indeed a pilgrim's humble lot.  
He took his scanty meal, and when the sun  
Had risen again, ere yet his course was run,  
I sought the stranger in his lonely cell,  
And led him forth ;—he spoke a last farewell,  
And went his way, but left not thy domain :  
Returning soon, a suppliant again,  
He who a wanderer to thy portals came,  
And, meekly kneeling, in his Master's name,  
Craved of thy child the boon of food and rest  
For one short night, became her welcome guest ;  
And for this pilgrim's love"—he faltered—" she  
Hath broken her vows to Staufen's lord and thee !"

This was the word that sealed her sire's sad doom :  
He muttered curses 'gainst he knew not whom ;  
His head lay on his bosom, and that breast,  
Like the wide sea, forgot the thought of rest.  
Tears flowed apace ;—oh ! his had been a life  
Unused to peace, familiar long with strife ;  
In boyhood, when he scarce a sword could wield,  
His very play-ground was the battle-field,  
His home the camp, his bed the mountain's breast,  
Rocks for his pillow ;—thus he loved to rest.  
In early youth he felt grief's billows roll  
Their waters o'er his oft too-generous soul :  
His mother died ; scarce earth received its clay,  
Ere death, relentless, called his sire away.

The flames of war throughout his wide domain  
Had fiercely raged, and with a crimson stain  
His halls were dyed, polluted by a hand  
Once linked in his by friendship's grateful band.  
Exposed to whisperings, and charged with guilt,  
With shedding blood his hands had never spilt,  
His limbs were fettered with a torturing chain ;  
He woke to weep, he slept to weep again,  
His couch a dungeon, where the light of day  
Was but a shadow of the moon's pale ray !  
With the proud Gaul, upon the blood-stained plain,  
His chosen warriors now had fought in vain  
For home and liberty, and counting life  
No boon if vanquished, perished in the strife.  
Oh ! than this all, more deep within his breast  
Sank the sad tale the vassal's lips expressed ;  
Already crushed beneath the weight combined  
Of a weak body and a wandering mind,  
This filled the cup of misery and woe ;  
Yea, more—he felt its waters overflow !

Beside his lord in silence stood the slave,  
He saw the tears the mourner's cold cheek lave ;  
And many a wanderer stayed his steps awhile  
To watch the lip that owned nor frown nor smile,  
And deemed life passing from the brow, whose hue  
Each moment paler and more livid grew.  
One ventured near ; he stooped and fixed his gaze  
Upon the blade which yet he feared to raise ;  
“ Heimburg ” was graven there ; its hue of red  
Told that some heart in deadly strife had bled.  
With a low voice, he dared to ask his lot  
Whose name it bore ;—the mourner answered not—

The sun declined ; along the angry sky  
Dark clouds, the tempest's heralds, rolled fast by ;  
No lonely wanderer now was left behind,—  
The shades of evening fell ; the cool night-wind

Played o'er the sunken brow and silvery hair  
Of him who, wrapp'd in thought, yet lingered there.  
Then suddenly, in trembling accents, fell  
From the knight's lips the name he loved so well ;  
As from a dream he rose, the burning tear  
He dashed aside, and to the serf drew near :

“ I must away, Balthasar ! night and day  
Are both alike to me ; the sun's last ray  
Hath left the earth, and dark as is my lot  
The heavens are. Up, slave ! I heed it not.  
Far o'er the hills there is a wide domain  
These eyes could trace through deepest night again,  
Once a fair region,—now, of all most drear ;—  
Mount, mount thy steed ! why linger we yet here ?  
Forget man's idle tales : thou who hast trod  
At this still hour yon unfrequented sod,  
Shalt pass unharmed where the wild waters flow,  
As when thou cam'st, a messenger of woe !  
The clouds are gathering fast ; as they roll on,  
Methinks they seem to urge us to be gone !”

The serf obeyed ; he seized the quivering rein,  
And silently bestrode his steed again.  
There was such wildness in the knight's dark look,  
That even he but ill his gaze could brook ;  
And by a gleam of light, which, flashing now  
From heaven's high canopy, illumed his brow,  
The serf could trace a frown, which, well he knew,  
Betokened more than grief and anguish too.  
On, on they hurried, and again the wood,  
Gloomy and lone, rose up, and the cold flood  
Seemed a proud barrier to the spot where lay  
The crumbling fragments of a bygone day.  
The vassal trembled,—o'er the rocky shore  
Broke the black waters with an angry roar ;  
Thrice had he ventured, and his charger's blood  
In the fierce strife had dyed the raging flood,

And, as he cleft the tide, the frowning shore  
Seemed to recede, as he advanced, the more ;—  
He thought of this, and awe crept o'er his soul,  
As at his feet he watched the mad waves roll ;  
And ill forebodings stormed his doubting heart,  
Fears that he wished, but dared not to impart.

“On—quick, Balthasar ! thou hast thrice defied  
This yawning gulf ; then be thou now the guide !  
Thou lingerest ! Ha ! would'st thou the danger shun ?  
Faint heart ! 'tis vain,—yon shore must yet be won !  
To dread the struggle ill becomes the breast  
Whose power, oft roughly tried, hath stood the test.  
Dost thou fear death ? If yon proud wave should close  
Forever o'er thee, there thou'lt find repose.  
Dark is thy brow,—methinks thy cheek is pale ;  
Say, hast thou kindred, who might then bewail  
Thy loss with tears ? some maiden left behind,  
Of whom thou dream'st, who hath to thee been kind ?  
If it be thus,—stay, stay ! I would not break  
A maiden's heart : here leave me for her sake !  
I wooed and won a fair Helvetian bride,  
And one as beauteous flourished at her side ;  
And these I loved ! their fond and sunny smile  
Could cheer this breast, its loneliest thoughts beguile.  
But that was long ago,—those hours have passed ;  
The night of sorrow hath set in at last.  
The first is dead ! and one,—thou know'st too well  
The tale of woe these lips refuse to tell !  
Yet dost thou doubt ? then I will lead thee on.  
I wish not life,—its hopes, its joys are gone.  
Who now is left to weep if this frail breath  
Beneath yon angry wave were hushed in death ?  
Who now is left to calm this throbbing breast,  
To soothe this brow ? None ! Vassal, *there* is rest !”

Thus spoke the knight : he grasped the rein ; the steel,  
Plunged in his steed, was buried to the heel ;  
His noble charger reared, and one huge leap  
Bore steed and rider to the foaming deep.



A hollow splash, a yet more sullen roar,  
Broke from the torrent as it swept the shore ;  
Fears struggled fiercely in the vassal's breast,  
His altered mien too well their power confessed.  
Already dashed the wild waves at his feet,  
Seeming to taunt him with his base retreat ;  
Could he behold his lord, a man of years,  
Bowed down with sorrow, and made weak with tears ;  
Whose wrinkled brow, sunk cheek, and silvery hair  
Whispered how long the serf had known his care ;—  
Could he behold him sink beneath the wave,  
While yet his arm might succour or might save ?  
No ! quick as thought, with a bright lingering dream  
Of home and love, he plunged into the stream.

To one at last the struggle seemeth o'er,  
One panting steed hath gained the rugged shore ;  
One of the twain hath lived ; which may it be ?  
It is the knight !—the vassal ! where is he ?  
Hurled from his foaming steed, he strove in vain,  
With outstretched arms, to reach the shore again ;  
And wildly struggling, his despairing cry  
Rose o'er the torrent as the breeze swept by.  
Slowly he sank, then high above the stream  
Flashed his plumed helmet in the moon's pale beam,  
As once more upward borne, with dying hand,  
Dreaming of strength he could no more command,  
He seized a fragment which the winds had torn  
From some huge trunk, and for a moment borne  
Towards the dark shore, hope, like a last bright ray,  
Thrilled through his breast, then fled in night away !  
Tossed to and fro 'midst the wild waters' strife,  
With a low prayer the serf gasped forth his life ;  
And far from home and kindred, died for him  
Whose heart should mourn not, nor his eye grow dim !

The knight reposed not ; from the mangled side  
Of his proud war-steed in a crimson tide

Flowed the warm blood, and trickling from the girth,  
Marked his mad progress o'er the ensanguined earth.  
He saw it not ! his thoughts were far away,  
Where on the plains of Gaul his warriors lay,  
Or on Helvetia's heights ; but to his lot,  
Yet all unrealised, they wandered not.  
The hours rolled on and woke another morn,  
And earth beheld its fair and rosy dawn ;  
The stars withdrew, the goddess of the night  
Was shamed and vanquished by a brighter light ;  
The sun arose, a glorious sight to see,  
Clothed with new radiance and majesty.  
Each plain, each mountain, wore a joyous look ;  
The gushing spring and softly murmuring brook  
Alike were conscious of his cheering ray,  
And welcomed eagerly the new-born day.  
Here a still lake, robed in the sun's bright beam,  
Contrasted strangely with the icy stream,  
Which had defied the serf's attempt to save,  
And rolled its waters proudly o'er his grave.  
The busy crowd seemed all on pleasure bent,  
And dreamed not of the stranger's dark intent ;  
He reined his steed, and soon a playful child  
Alone passed by, and gazing on him, smiled,  
Then hastened onward with a soul as free  
From care's alloy as man's on earth can be.  
This look struck terror to the mourner's heart :  
It found no genial response there : " Depart !"  
Was all *he* spoke. Alas, poor little thing,  
He heedeth not thy guileless murmuring ;  
I had joined with thee in thy careless play,  
Not with harsh words thus hurried thee away,  
I had not cast thee off in cold disdain ;  
But, ah ! his heart no more shall love again !

Upon the lake, whose waters seemed  
Robed in a deep and varying hue,  
And, fanned by each soft zephyr, beamed  
With radiance ever bright and new,

A bark was seen ; its glittering sail  
Was spread to catch the morning gale.  
On the frail skiff, in white arrayed,  
Reclined a young and beauteous maid,  
Who, while her fingers lightly bound  
    With threads of gold her flowing hair,  
Gazed on the lake, as though she found  
    A clear and spotless mirror there.  
Her brow was pensive ; yet even this  
    Dimmed not the lustre of her eyes,—  
    Just as when clouds in summer rise  
Towards the bright sun, we deem not less  
    The half-veiled glory of the skies.  
Her couch was strewed with forest-flowers,  
Culled fresh from nature's dewy bowers :  
With violets such as o'er the stream  
Breathed fragrance to the sun's first beam.  
Beside her sat a youth, who wore  
    A look of joyousness which he  
Perhaps had never known before,—  
Such was the blush that lingered o'er  
    His cheek, of mirth and gaiety ;  
Such was the smile that ever played  
    Around his lips, and seemed to rise,  
Ere it had time to droop or fade,  
    Thence with new freshness to the eyes.  
The deepening fervour of his glance,  
    Long riveted on one so fair,—  
By nought averted,—told that chance  
    Found him not thus enraptured there ;  
And that the maiden at his side  
    Saw not in him a stranger,—one  
Of those who, on the unruffled tide,  
    Hailed the first rising of the sun.  
No ! o'er his dark and manly brow  
    With mirth love's soft emotions blend ;  
And, as he kneels before her now,  
    On whom his dearest hopes depend,

Their glances meet, and almost seem  
Like meteors which together beam.

There is a stranger on that shore  
Whom none have ever seen before ;  
He stands unheeded and unknown,  
Apart from all ; and he alone  
Shrinks back, as one oppressed with care,  
From pleasure, which he too might share.  
He gazed upon the wide expanse,—

    The lovers met anew his eye ;  
But, oh ! how different was his glance,  
    As their bark glided softly by !  
It shadowed not forth grief or pain ;  
    No ! it bespoke a deeper woe ;  
A throbbing of the heart and brain,  
    A kindling of that bitter throe,  
The memory of the past, again.

She who on flowers there reclined  
Awoke within his wandering mind  
The thought of her in whose blue eyes  
    Once lay a charm which even could bless  
His dreariest hours ; whose fair disguise  
Of gaiety dispelled his sighs,

    Or soothed them into happiness.  
He thought !—yes, in his soul, bereft  
Almost of reason's light, was left  
A ray sufficient to recall  
Her broken vow, her shame, her fall.  
This burst upon him, this—this all !  
And she appeared no more the same,  
No more his child, except by name.  
Once loved by all, adored by him,

    Resembling even one whose eye,  
Save when *he* wept, was never dim,  
Her magic glance in hours gone by  
Seemed radiant as the evening star,  
Yet gentle as its beamings are !

But now its lustre, to the knight,  
Was as the lamp's expiring light  
Hid in the shade of deepest night !  
Oh ! the remembrance of her glance  
    Recalled those happier days, which he  
Now viewed like one who, in a trance,  
    Grasps after things which he doth see,  
    But shadows of reality !

Sweet is the voice of music, stealing  
    From lover's lips upon the ear,  
Long-cherished dreams of hope revealing,  
    When one kind heart alone is near ;  
And, as his hand sweeps o'er the chords  
    Of the soft lute, his plaintive tale  
Can touch the bosom ; for, than words  
Which the most ardent tongue hath lent,  
Its harmonies more eloquent  
    Each cold or absent look bewail.  
The youth felt this, and raised the lute,  
Too long untuned, unheeded, mute ;  
And as the skilful minstrel flings  
His hand across the harp, and sings  
    His tale of love or chivalry,  
So now his fingers swept the strings,  
    And woke their sweetest melody.

The knight beheld him, and a frown  
Darkened his brow as he looked down ;  
He spoke not—wept not—but like one  
    Whom all earth's gifts have ceased to bless,  
He stood dejected and alone :  
His sun had set. Alas ! there shone  
    On him no ray of happiness.  
But, hark ! the youth hath touched the strings,  
    And those soft melodies that steal  
From the lute's chords, in murmurings  
    Which the young heart's first love reveal,

Float gently onward o'er the lake  
Towards one who, though he feels it not,  
Yet lingers, as though loth to break  
The spell that chains him to the spot.  
The minstrel seemed intent alone  
Upon the maiden's glance, like one  
With hope made joyous ; not in vain  
He struck the chords ;—thus ran the strain :—

“ It was a still and sunny eve,  
Fresh with the balmy air of day,  
I wandered forth a wreath to weave,  
Ere each fair flower should fade away.

Sweet fragrant buds of all I took,  
And one more beauteous than the rest  
I gathered, where a murmuring brook  
Kissed, as it flowed, its gentle guest.

With eager hand at last I tried  
To twine the flower in my wreath ;  
I placed a jasmine by its side,  
A rose above, a rose beneath.

In vain ; I could not bind it there,  
It ever drooped again to earth ;  
And as it lay, of all most fair,  
It seemed a thousand others worth.

Soon slumber's chains came softly o'er me,  
And suddenly, as in a dream,  
A youthful maiden stood before me ;  
And, guided by the moon's pale beam,

O'er the greensward moved slowly on  
With such light step and airy look,  
I knew not whom I gazed upon ;—  
Perhaps the Spirit of the Brook !

My wreath was in her hand ;—the flower  
I could not bind adorned it now ;  
And in our path an unseen bower  
Fragrant rose up, I knew not how.

Our steps were stayed as we drew near  
Its verdant portal ; and I heard  
A voice which, to my listening ear,  
Thus breathed with music in each word :

‘ Enter !—Thy wreath is magic now,  
It hath a charm thou could’st not twine ;  
And circling once a maiden’s brow,  
’Twill make her heart, her love, all thine.’

I held my wreath ; and a glad train  
Of maidens, free from every care,  
Tripped lightly past and round again,  
As though no eye beheld them there.

But whose was the most joyous glance,  
The brightest smile, the softest tresses,  
Of those who in the festive dance  
Mingled their songs and wild caresses ?

I watched, till gaily to the bower  
One came, whose voice far off I knew ;  
At the familiar sound, the flower  
Seemed to possess a dazzling hue.

It was thyself ;—my gentle guide  
And many a group soon gathered round ;  
Thy golden locks I drew aside,  
And thee, fairest of all, I crowned.”

The soft notes of the music died away :  
Hushed was the merry lute,—the joyous lay ;  
Yet the knight gazed ; his eye was fixed upon  
The youthful minstrel, till the bark was gone.

Oh ! he had often thus his hours beguiled,  
But, like a dream, the memory of his child,  
Shadowed in that fair picture, o'er his brain  
Broke, with forebodings yet unfelt, again ;  
And in that breast where long had been enshrined  
The ardent hopes and passions of the mind,  
As in one holy temple, where alone  
Love had possessed the sceptre and the throne,  
Hatred, unknown before, now held its sway,  
And love grew faint, or withered quite away !  
He grasped his blade, and quickly from the sight  
Started aside, as shrinks the bird of night,  
When, wandering forth too soon, it meets a ray  
Of the warm sun, the last bright beam of day !  
Awhile the lord of Heimburg lingered there,  
Heedless of all, the image of despair ;  
The frequent sigh, the thick and deep-drawn breath,  
To those around seemed harbingers of death ;  
Yet the kind words of sympathy they brought  
The stranger spurned ;—no solace thence he sought !

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## III.

*Scene : the Castle of Heimburg.*

THE pale-faced moon and high-linked starry chain  
Shine dimly down upon a wide domain,  
Where a huge battlement of unhewn stone  
Stands forth in stately solitude alone.  
All, all is hushed ;—even Nature seems to sleep :  
'Tis night, and eyes that scarce have ceased to weep  
Are wandering sadly to a distant land,  
Till Love casts anchor on the wished-for strand.  
No festive crowds within those banquet-halls  
Now meet as they were wont ;—the frowning walls  
No more give back the warder's measured tread ;  
All is so lonely, even life seems dead !  
The brook, whose waters once danced gaily on,  
Murmuring through many a verdant mead, is gone ;  
And the deep hollow wrapped in parchèd green  
Alone remains to tell that it hath been.  
Gloom reigns without ;—but, oh ! within this pile  
'Tis yet more drear ! How changed, how forced each smile !  
The harp, unstrung, hath long been cast away,  
The sad memorial of a bygone day !  
Doth no hand care to wake its plaintive strain  
Where once it rang, in Heimburg's halls, again ?

See, in the casement yonder, lone and damp,  
Hard by the castle's portal, gleams a lamp  
Low in its socket ; and its glimmering light  
Seems loth to break the darkness of the night.  
Upon a couch of rude materials framed  
A serf reposed ;—not oft such rest he claimed !  
His long thin beard, and locks of silvery gray,  
Though youth to manhood scarce had passed away,

His care-worn cheek, and sunk lid seemed to tell  
A grief concealed, yet mourned,—remembered well !  
He starts—awakes ;—slowly he looks around ;  
There is a well-known yet unwonted sound  
Breaking from o’er the abyss ;—unlike the prayer  
The wanderer offers when benighted there.  
Scarce had he reached the threshold ere once more  
Was heard the shout yet louder than before :  
“Open to Heimburg !” Well that stern command  
The vassal knew, and with a trembling hand  
He seized a torch and held it to the flame,  
Then sought his long-lost lord :—yes ! ’twas *his* name.  
He reached the drawbridge, and the torch’s glare  
Dimly revealed an armèd warrior there.  
Leaning upon his sword, his corslet bright  
Reflected back the rays of flickering light.

The massive chain seemed buried in the rock ;  
Scarce the huge key turned in the grating lock,  
So long untouched and slumbering had it lain,  
Since last he wandered from his wide domain.  
Still was the drawbridge raised,—the deep abyss  
Yawned at his feet,—how dark the precipice !—  
When, at the warder’s side, a pearl-white hand  
Seized with convulsive grasp the iron band.  
Why shrinks the astonished vassal ? Ha ! he sees  
Dishevelled tresses floating on the breeze ;  
And those blue eyes ! ’tis Heimburg’s child, who fain  
Would hear that sound, her father’s voice, again.  
Roused from her sleep, a slumber scarce called rest,  
Her flowing robe but ill concealed the breast,  
Whose snowy spotlessness, exposed to view  
Unheeded now, each moment fairer grew.

“Lady, what dost thou here ?” the vassal cried ;  
“Not yet bath maid, unharmed, this blast defied ;  
These hands have failed to loose yon ponderous chain,  
And shall it yield to thee ? See, not in vain

Thy hopes have been. Away ! the prayers which thou  
Hast for thy father breathed are answered now.  
Back to thy hall ; 'tis night ; I might count dear  
Thy presence, lady, all unlooked-for here,  
Save that one waits without, whose stern decree  
To a slave's task, methinks, ordained not thee.  
And never yet hath maiden left her bower,  
A wanderer here alone at this still hour,  
Where all is cheerless,—where no garden lies,  
No flower blooms that with the morning dies,—  
But the rude whisperings of man have found  
Some tale to tell to eager ears around.  
Dost thou fear this ? then will I rather tear,  
Even with my teeth, this chain ; nor may'st thou share  
The toil with one, whose lasting shame would be,  
That he in weakness had sought aid of thee !”

The lady heeded not ; her eyes were turned,  
Beaming with tenderness, on him who spurned  
The aid she proffered ; and her hand again,  
Unyielding, grasped the portal's massive chain.  
The vassal felt his wonted firmness gone,—  
Sure 'twas no mortal that he looked upon !

“ Hugo, thou oft in strife the foe hast met,  
Thy heart is steeled ; but could'st thou not forget  
Gladly thy light repose, to welcome him  
Whom much thou lovest ?—What ! *thine* eye is dim !  
Thou answerest not !—Dost thou recall a day  
When a child's voice beguiled *thy* homeward way ?  
When thy kind words of tenderness and truth,  
Affection's ardour and the warmth of youth,  
Found some fair lips which shrunk not from thy kiss,  
Some breast to share thy sorrow and thy bliss ?  
Such thoughts might o'er thy brow a shadow cast ;  
Yet stay not now to dream upon the past !  
Thou know'st my sire ; if he should see thee weep  
Prostrate before his child,—the dungeon-keep,

Where but the owlet dwells, where is no ray  
Of light to chase the damp cold gloom away,  
Might own thy presence, and its miry bed,  
Where scarce man's foot hath trod, confess thy tread."

"No, lady, no ! My tears flowed not for this,  
I wept not at the thought of bygone bliss,  
Though such might be ;—oh, no ! though o'er my fate  
Dark clouds have gathered, and made desolate  
The heart that once knew not a single care,  
Save that which love, deep, true, had planted there !  
I mourned for thee ; to see thee, who not less  
With neck unmantled, seem'st all loveliness,  
Torn by this blast ; the mantling hue that shone  
Upon thy cheek, no longer radiant—gone !  
But I forget thy sire ;—these hands grow weak  
And nerveless, lady, while with thee I speak ;  
A time may come when I my tale may tell,  
And crave thy sympathy ; till then, farewell !"

The hinges grated : with a fearful shock  
The drawbridge fell upon its bed of rock.

The knight approached ; upon the frowning pile,  
Itself unchanged, he fixed his gaze awhile :  
Where are the hearts that owned his once kind hand ?  
Is this his home ? this his loved fatherland ?

"Welcome to Heimburg !" thus the wondering slave,  
As to his lord the massive key he gave.

"Father, my father !" there is heard a cry ;  
"My own dear father !" Hark ! the sound is nigh.  
It is her gentle voice whose faithful hands,  
Bleeding, have loosed the portal's iron bands,  
To welcome him she loves : with fond desire  
And bursting heart she stands before her sire ;  
And her cold lips are pressed upon his cheek,  
In silence moving ;—they refuse to speak.

Ah ! for a moment in his breast there burns  
A flame long, long unfelt ; where'er he turns,  
It wakes the memory of the time when he  
Dreamt not how lone that sod was doomed to be.  
See, down his cheek his child's tears trickle yet ;  
They rouse emotions he would fain forget :  
He started back ;—again her shame, her fall  
Flashed, glowed before him, and rekindled all ;  
And the dim ray of tenderness no more  
Illumed his heart ; it glimmered, and 'twas o'er.

“ Off, girl !—away ! No longer child of mine :  
Once pure thy blood, but now where guilt like thine ?  
Off ! from these arms : there was a time when thou  
Might'st nestle there. Away ! 'tis not thus now.  
Think'st thou it is to one proud guest alone,  
To him thou seekest, that thy sin is known ?  
Thus dost thou mock my love—thus would'st thou break,  
Ida, the heart that beat but for thy sake !  
Where are the lips beneath whose treacherous kiss  
Thy brow first reddened ; who first told of bliss,  
And with false words beguiled thee ? who is he  
That hath dared thus to lie to Heaven and thee ?”

“ Speak not thus, father. Oh, had thy child sought  
The wide world round, no voice save thine had brought  
Joy to her breast ;—no smile had cheered her lot  
With one bright ray, if thine for her beamed not !  
My heart went with thee when, on that dark day,  
Torn suddenly from mine embrace away,  
I saw thee, faithful to thy chief's command,  
Lead forth thy warriors to a distant land.  
Ah ! rumour whispered soon, that at thy side,  
He whom I loved,—trusted as my sure guide—  
Whose name with thine bound my lone soul to life  
With such dear bands, had perished in the strife.  
I murmured not ; but lest my heart should break,  
I prayed that Heaven soon, for thine Ida's sake,

Would bring thee back—to Heimburg's halls restore  
My lord, my father, to go thence no more.  
I knew no hope but this ;—the summer sun  
I heeded not, save when his course was run  
I marked each day, and loved to think that he,  
Hid from my sight, yet shone perchance on thee !  
Look on thy battlement ;—there, in that tower  
Oft have I passed the lonesome midnight hour,  
With these eyes fixed upon thy wide domain,  
Eager to welcome thy return again.  
Slowly each sad and weary night rolled on,  
And morning dawned,—I watched till that was gone ;  
Long wert thou absent ! See yon house of prayer ;  
Oft have I, weeping, thought upon thee there.  
At last thou camest, and the glimmering light  
These hands prepared to illume thy steps by night  
Beams feebly yet ; though faint as its dim flame  
The hope I cherished, love was still the same !  
I flew to meet thee, and strove not in vain  
To unbar thy portals, though the ponderous chain  
Tore my frail flesh : see how a crimson stream  
Hath dyed thy gates ;—touch them ! 'tis not a dream  
That breaks upon thee : no ! these stains shall tell  
How to a woman's hand thy drawbridge fell ;  
And now how dark thy brow ; how cold thy kiss !—  
Thy lips move not : say why, oh ! why is this ?”

“Too well thou know'st ; ha, yes ! thy words are true ;  
It mattered not how cold the night-wind blew ;  
Oft hast thou dared to brave a fiercer blast,  
Nor deemed it chill so *he* but came at last !  
Too well, false girl, the glimmering light I see  
In yon high tower ;—but doth it burn for me ?  
Was it to guide thine home-returning sire  
That thy hands kindled its betraying fire ?  
No ! 'tis a beacon to an eye below,  
To some loved guest whose name I may not know !  
Such was thy will ; but it hath drawn to-night  
No shameless wanderer here that fears the light :

Behold thy long-lost sire ! would that the stain  
 Of his heart's blood had dyed the battle-plain  
 While yet thine image, innocent as fair,  
 Like a last link to earth was graven there.  
 Look not upon me ; no more life shall blend  
 Its joys and sorrows :—here thy days must end !”

“Father, I kneel ! See, thy child's neck is laid  
 Bare and unmantled to receive thy blade :  
 Yet stay thine hand ; a moment's respite give !  
 Thou lov'st me not !—then wish I not to live.  
 Without thee, oh, how dreary were my fate !  
 My home how dark !—my hearth how desolate !  
 No hand to guide me o'er life's troubled sea,  
 No heart to love me as I still love thee !  
 To tread these silent halls where many a wreath  
 Perfumed the air that I was wont to breathe  
 In childhood's days, and think on hours gone by,  
 When, 'midst each scene of mirth and pleasure, I,  
 A youthful girl, looked on the giddy train  
 Of flower-crowned dancers, like a fairy chain  
 Circling around, yet deemed but one hour spent  
 With thee worth more than all this blandishment ;—  
 And then to feel that to this aching heart—  
 All, all unchanged still—thou could'st impart,  
 By one kind word, hope, peace—yes, life again,  
 Yet to pant after the sweet boon in vain !  
 And forced to sigh forsaken and alone,  
 Without a tear to mingle with mine own,  
 To yield but dumb submission to thy will,  
 And at each pulse become more wretched still !—  
 This, this my fate !—Oh, no ! let me not live ;  
 Earth were a wide waste, which could never give,—  
 Were all its thousand springs of happiness  
 Centred in one, and *that* called up to bless  
 Haply my lot, oh, worse than fatherless !—  
 One dream of peace, one joyous thought, or sever—  
 Nay, even lighten my heart's chain for ever !”

Upon the cold damp sod the weeping girl  
Knelt with unmantled neck : each auburn curl  
Drooped to the earth ; and now, in deep despair,  
High the knight brandishes, unsheathed and bare,  
His glittering falchion : yet his arm is stayed ;  
His trembling hand scarce grasps his two-edged blade.  
With gentle voice, " Ere 'tis too late, relent,  
' Father," she sighed ; " thy child is innocent.  
I loved but one save thee, and as his bride  
I mourned for him who perished at thy side.  
Yet was my heart resigned : I thought that Heaven  
Not without cause that tie so soon had riven :  
Oh, then it was that my young love might be  
No more divided,—centred all on thee !  
My mother gone—feeble thy step with age,  
What staff should guide thy lonely pilgrimage,—  
What star illumine thy path, and with its ray  
Beam through all clouds, or chase them quite away,—  
If not thy child's kind voice and tender care,  
Constant, unchanged, unchangeable, were there ?  
Deem'st thou me false ;—oh, then why linger still ?  
Strike, strike at once ; I die, if such thy will !"

She clasped her hands ;—like lightning through the air  
Flashed the knight's falchion, and the torch's glare  
Fell on a quivering trunk,—a bleeding head,  
The eyes yet weeping as ere life had fled :  
One gasp ! too late he shudders :—she is dead !

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That cry is hushed ! that voice hath passed away,  
And gentle zephyrs breathe a mournful lay,  
Where a low mound doth meet the stranger's eye,  
Bidding him pause awhile ere he pass by.



No towering monument records her loss ;  
Few words rehearse the tale ; an unhewn cross  
Tells where she slumbers, and from man's rude tread  
Guards the last narrow dwelling of the dead.

'Tis not forsaken ; no ! thy tomb is yet,  
Lady of Heimburg, with grief's tribute wet :  
And who is he that wanders to this sod  
At each still midnight hour ? whose feet have trod  
This plain of late ? It is the step of age,  
As of one trembling on his pilgrimage.  
Is't he, is't he, borne down with grief and guilt,  
Whose hands yet reek beneath the blood he spilt ?  
Is't he, is't he, before whose maddened brain  
One vision flits ;—the image of the slain !  
Are these *his* tears :—what doth he here alone ?  
What means this sigh—this anguish-speaking groan ?  
Is passion yet unslaked ? Her breast no more  
Shall bear his insults ; no ! that time is o'er.

It is the knight !—behold his livid cheek ;  
And those deep wrinkles ; oh, how loud they speak !  
See now his tottering knees ; and the shrunk hand  
That cast this stain upon his fatherland,  
And slew the child in whose caress oft he,  
In days gone by, had lingered tenderly.  
Ah ! now he kneels upon her tomb to weep,  
While other eyelids seek repose in sleep—  
Denied to him ! How bitter is the sting,—  
The pang of conscience ! Oh, what offering,  
What sacrifice, what gift would he not bring,  
Were it his own heart's-blood, but once again  
To hear her voice who sighed for life in vain !

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Towards Heimburg's towers, swiftly a dazzling train  
Of plumèd horsemen scours the untrodden plain :  
'Tis past,—they hasten on,—the hill is won ;  
Their armour glitters in the morning sun.  
They gain the battlements ; the trumpet's sound  
Proclaims a herald. All is still around :—  
“The portals open, and the gates throw wide ;  
Prepare for him who claims his beauteous bride !”  
The drawbridge fell ; young Staufeu led the way  
Through the dark turrets ; and in dense array  
Two hundred followers armed and clad in steel,  
From the plumèd helmet to the forkèd heel,  
Passed the abyss ; a sign, and the whole band  
Reined back their steeds to await their lord's command.

The old man knelt before him. Well, too well  
He guessed the tale the noble youth would tell.

“Sir knight, thy blessing ! Ha !—hold forth thy hand ;  
Welcome again to home, to fatherland ;  
I joy to greet thee ; but one faileth yet,  
Whose absence I could least of all forget ;  
She who was wont to hasten to thy side,  
As home thou wandered'st, is now my bride !  
Go, bring her hither ; 'tis her smile I seek :  
Thou lingerest still ! What gloom o'erspreads thy cheek !  
See here thy son ; these lips can ill delay  
Their promised bliss. Father, lead thou the way,  
Ere ill forebodings storm a lover's breast ;  
It's warmth thou know'st ;—thus hast thou too been blest.”

“Thou seek'st my child !” the old man low replied ;  
“A tenderer name I know not.—She thy bride ?”

“Ha, yes—my bride ! our love from early youth,  
A chieftain's honour witness to the truth :  
I knew that while a wanderer from thy land,  
Far from thy child, it was thy stern command,

That in thy halls no guest of noble race,  
No knight of courtly mien should find a place ;  
Lest some bold chieftain, once received within  
Thy hoary pile, perchance should seek to win  
Thine Ida's smile ; or, brooking no delay,  
With sword and lance should bear his prize away.  
Yet 'twas thy will that he whom hunger brought  
A suppliant to thy gates, who humbly sought  
The shelter which to poverty elsewhere  
Had been denied, should be admitted there.  
My arm was weak when towards the hills of Gaul  
Thy band went proudly forth, the hope of all  
Who owned thy name ;—with strength renewed again,  
My heart beat high to tread the battle-plain.  
Yet ere that day, I sought thy child to tell  
My vows once more,—a maiden's fears to quell ;  
Before thy gates thy warder asked my lot,  
And to a *knight* thy portals opened not.  
I went my way ;—a pilgrim's garb I found,  
A hood, and robe girt with a girdle round ;  
And for a lance a staff I bore, and thus,  
Of food and shelter, with voice tremulous,  
I craved the boon ; and these enraptured eyes  
Gazed on thy child again ! The frail disguise  
I cast aside, and leaning on this breast,  
In trembling accents she her love confessed.  
A priest was brought ; in yonder house of prayer  
We knelt by night ; no prying guests were there.  
Alone he blessed us, and thy child became  
My own, my bride,—fairest of Staufen's name !  
Ere a short week had fled, the trumpet's sound  
Thrilled through the land, and called each warrior round  
His chieftain's standard, and in proud array  
They gathered soon, impatient for the fray.  
I lingered not, lest the warm tears that fell  
O'er Ida's cheek should, like a magic spell,  
Keep back my heart ; I left my bride, to be  
In Gaul partaker of the strife with thee !

Our band dispersed ; few lived to ask thy lot,  
And I was bound with those that knew thee not.  
A captive long I lay, and a rude chain  
Fettered these limbs ; yet liberty again  
At last was granted.—Father, he who bore  
The pilgrim's garb needs hood and staff no more !”

The knight arose ; a livid hue o'erspread  
His wrinkled brow, as low he bowed his head :  
“ Dead—dead—I slew her ! She whose love could bring  
Joy to the bosom, when life was a thing  
I cared not to possess ; who to this brain  
Gave by her smile reason and light again,  
Died by this hand !—Start not ; these lips must tell,  
Staufen, of her who loved thee once so well.  
Far, far away, beyond the hills of Gaul,  
Free men no more, I saw around me fall,  
Mingled in deadly strife, that chosen band  
Of warriors, once the glory of their land ;  
And I was left : I bared my breast to share  
The fate of those who perished nobly there ;  
Heedless of life, I sought in vain ; none gave  
The wished-for boon ; unfettered, yet a slave,  
I wandered forth, the scorn, the laughing-stock  
Of the vile crowd : I heard the fierce Gaul mock  
Thy vanquished land, unmindful that a day  
Might dawn when he again should own her sway.  
From the still brook I drank, then onward fled  
Far from the scene ; the wild woods gave me bread ;  
And as night fell I bowed my trembling knee,  
And rested beneath heaven's high canopy.  
From my rude couch, once ere the day was spent,  
Upwards I gazed on the blue firmament :  
My heart was troubled ; the warm tears fell fast,  
As o'er me broke the memory of the past.  
I thought not only of thy country's name,  
A by-word then, though she was wont to claim  
Homage of all :—no ! I felt o'er my soul  
Tumultuous waves of deepest sorrow roll !

Before my brain rose up in dark array  
Too vivid recollections of that day  
When she from earth was called, to whom were given  
My earliest vows; upon whose spirit heaven  
Had poured its choicest gifts!—Oh, memory yet  
Reviews the scene my heart would fain forget.  
There was one solace left—one link to bind  
This soul to life, and reason to this mind;  
One ray of hope, which, like the meteor, shone  
Most bright and clear since other orbs were gone!  
It was thine image, Ida; thou didst seem  
Like a fair angel, casting a sweet gleam  
Of light around;—oft had I yearned in vain  
To hear thy voice, to see thy smile again!  
Staufen, my words are few: the thought of her  
Yet cheered my spirit, when a messenger  
From Heimburg's walls drew near; he told how she  
Had broken the faith plighted in youth to thee;—  
To the wild ravings of a hooded guest  
Had given the love so long by thee possessed!  
The rest thou knowest: like a frail bark tossed  
On the wide sea, with hope, with reason lost,  
I sought and slew my child! Where yon low mound  
Doth meet thine eye, she sleepeth!—Look around!  
See'st thou the path these feet are wont to tread?  
'Twill guide thee to the dwelling of the dead!"

With a loud shriek of woe the knight again  
Breathed forth her name, then sank upon the plain!

Full twice a hundred blades, burnished and bare,  
Flashed from their sheaths and glittered in the air;  
Each warrior waited eagerly the word  
To avenge her death of whom his ear had heard.  
Low in the midst reclined a man of years,  
Pale his sunk cheek, and dim his eyes with tears,  
Beneath whose hand a guiltless child had died,  
Their country's flower and their chieftain's bride.

They gathered round ;—a sign, and every blade  
Sank in its sheath : the uplifted arm was stayed ;  
And almost breathless, each upon his steed  
Leaned low to hear if he should live or bleed ;  
While gazing mournfully upon their chief,  
Each warrior shared the burden of his grief.

He turned in silence to his chosen band,  
Thence to the aged knight ; and many a hand  
Once high for vengeance raised, eager to slay,  
Now gently bore his prostrate form away.  
With noiseless step, and with voice hushed and still,  
They sought, obedient to their chieftain's will,  
The lonely chapel where—though unrevealed—  
His love was pledged, his vows for ever sealed.  
Beside that humble altar he had bent  
Whose hand had fashioned Heimburg's battlement  
Long years before ; when all around forgot  
Man's holiest privilege, or knew it not ;  
When serf and noble 'midst wild scenes of strife,  
In war or revelry eked out their life,  
And scorned the stranger's counsel, which should seem  
To their rude hearts no more an idle dream,  
When death drew near and shewed the things they prized  
Fleeing their grasp,—their hopes unrealised !  
And since that time they who had borne his name  
Shared not alone for noble deeds his fame ;  
For rumour told how they were wont in prayer,  
Like him, each day, to seek new solace there.  
And to that shrine, as to a holy place,  
The beauteous Ida—fairest of her race—  
Had strayed from earliest youth ; and when to her  
Words scarce were given, had knelt a worshipper.

Thoughts such as these had risen in Staufen's breast,  
As oft, in Heimburg's walls a welcome guest,  
He had sought out with awe and silent tread  
The spot that woke the memory of the dead.

There, on a crumbling tablet, he had traced  
Deeds that should live when time had long effaced  
The rude inscription which rehearsed their name  
Who in life courted not the breath of fame.  
How changed the scene! Then, as on the worn stone  
He long had gazed, his voice and step alone  
Had echoed there, save when the vesper-bell  
Called a few wanderers home ere evening fell,  
And the faint breathings of their humble strain  
Ceasing ere long, left all more still again.  
Now, with loud murmurs, an indignant host  
Mourned for their chief as warriors who had lost  
The hand that led them, and, controlled no more,  
Each horseman raised the glittering lance he bore,  
And o'er the sod,—man's narrow place of rest,—  
Rider and steed in wild confusion pressed.  
Yet Staufen heeded not; his brow was bent  
Like one entranced—in mute astonishment;  
As though that breaking heart remembered not,  
Or failed to grasp the misery of his lot.  
Ere long, the aspect of the gathering crowd,  
The hum of voices as his followers bowed  
Around their leader, in unskilled array,  
Roused him to action; chased those dreams away  
Which dared to whisper that there could not be  
So dark, so hopeless a reality.

But Heimburg's lord!—do none amidst that band  
Remember him? Is there no friendly hand  
To seek some cooling draught that he may sip,  
And soothe the throbbing of his quivering lip?  
'Mongst those who gaze upon that aged chief,  
Is there not one to proffer the relief  
He asketh not? Forsaken! doth for him  
No bosom yearn, no pitying eye grow dim?  
Yes!—the fell passions that their hearts confessed  
Have vanished now; within each warrior's breast  
A new-born impulse reigns, which like a ray  
Of light hath chased their first dark thoughts away.

They loved his name ; the meanest of the band  
Could tell of gifts bestowed by his kind hand ;  
Or, sweetest of all benefits conferred,  
Owned the familiar look, the friendly word,  
Which gladdened those who brought each care and fear  
Freely to him, as to a father's ear.  
They knelt around ; Staufen, with filial care,  
Parted the straggling locks of silvery hair :  
He soothed the brow, unmindful of his aid,  
And as the marble cold on which it laid.

Back—back—ye gazers ! seek ye to restore  
Life to that dust ? Away ! it breathes no more.  
Will ye revive that pulse ?—call back that breath—  
Illume those eyes, fixed, motionless in death ?  
Away, away ! cease ye to lave that brow ;  
The stream ye pour it feels not, needs not now.  
Mock not that parchèd lip !—take hence yon cup !  
Have ye not held it long untasted up ?

No cloven helm, no bleeding limb revealed  
The wonted dangers of the battle-field,  
Or told its ghastly tale of secret strife,  
Of foes repelled—of victory bought with life.  
With such dread signs, their rude hearts, which had been  
Tranquil where death was a familiar scene,  
Had not thus faltered now, or thus obeyed  
The weak emotions which their glance betrayed.  
But, as in life unchanged, save that the hue  
Of his sunk cheek each moment paler grew,  
And the wild gaze and fixèd lip expressed  
Too well the untold sufferings of his breast,—  
He seemed to sleep ; upon that couch of stone  
Calmly to rest ;—care, sorrow, all unknown !  
And if in war they scarce beheld unmoved  
The speechless form of one they knew and loved,  
And lingered oft around the lifeless clay,  
Which their hands bore reluctantly away,



Much more they felt for his mysterious lot,  
Which, half convinced, they yet acknowledged not ;  
As though their eye and touch could still deceive,  
And veil the truth they cared not to believe.

But why prolong the story ?—time hath rent  
Those towers in twain ; of that proud battlement  
Scarce aught remains, save an unseemly heap,  
Where man hath ceased to dwell ; and they who keep  
Their flocks within its grateful shade by day,  
Ere evening falls haste eagerly away ;  
And though from earliest childhood they have been  
Familiar with each rumour, and have seen  
From infancy the bright sun rise and set  
O'er those deserted fragments—their lips yet,  
Not without awe and many a muttered prayer,  
Repeat the tale, or guide the stranger there.

See'st thou yon ruined pile ?—still may'st thou trace  
Within those tottering walls the resting-place  
Of Heimburg's lord ; but doth yon crumbling stone  
Recall the memory of that chief alone ?  
Doth yon rude cross, from which the wintry blast  
Ere long shall sweep the record of the past,  
Tell how he lived and perished ; and forget  
To bid thee, wanderer, stay thy footsteps yet,  
And dream of one whose voice once as it fell  
Gave to each word a more than magic spell ?  
No, lady ; no ! yon tablet mourns *thy* lot ;  
Yet graven words thy memory needeth not :  
No !—when that monumental cross is gone,  
And naught is left of all he looked upon,  
Still shall the history of a by-gone day,  
As oft of yore, the pilgrim's step delay.  
Lady of Heimburg ! in each heart shall be  
Thy lasting record ; and whene'er of thee  
The rude serf tells, his faltering lip shall claim  
The wanderer's tear as tribute to thy name !



# MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



## A DREAM OF FAIRY-LAND.

Inscribed to Two Sisters.



I DREAMT, as once upon my couch I lay,  
That I had wandered to a distant shore;  
From home and friends and kindred far away,  
Unto a land I ne'er had trod before.

It was a beauteous land, and I could see  
But woods and gleens, and music-rippling streams  
And sloping vales;—fair landscapes, such as we  
Not oft on earth discover, save in dreams.

Around my path the blushing violet grew,  
The myrtle and the jasmine, side by side,  
Mingling their sweet perfume and varied hue,  
As though in bands of sisterhood allied.

Upon each opening bud the dewy kiss  
Of heaven yet lingered;—soon the sun's warm ray  
Shone on the flowers, and, lest too much of bliss  
Should harm its favourites, called the pearl away.

And laughing brooks and countless gushing rills  
Murmured through meads arrayed in brightest green,  
And I could trace upon the distant hills  
The loveliest verdure eye had ever seen.

As man, when feeble and grown weak with age,  
Doth seek some friendly arm on which to rest ;  
And as he wanders on his pilgrimage,  
Oft leans his brow upon a kindred breast,—

So here the ivy had its kind arms twined  
Round many an oak with years asunder riven ;  
Seeming to shield it from the cool night-wind,  
The blast of winter and the snow of heaven.

While on the scene I mused, methought I heard,  
From out a neighbouring grove, a gentle strain ;  
I bent me low, and listened ;—’twas a bird  
That sang its morning song ;—’twas still again.

Unconsciously I wandered towards the dell  
Whence seemed to emanate the joyous sound ;  
And on mine eye sweet visions softly fell  
Of home and kindred, as I gazed around.

Each step recalled to mind my native land,  
And told of one fair region where oft I  
Was wont to linger ;—for kind friendship’s hand  
Ne’er suffered me to pass unwelcomed by.

I saw the well-known stream ;—the sun’s bright glance  
Illumed like verdant fields and fragrant bowers ;  
There was the same still vale that had perchance  
Confessed to lovers’ vows at twilight hours.

But though above me were the same blue skies,  
And all around a scene I knew so well,  
I looked in vain for the soft beaming eyes  
That ever chained me with a magic spell.

Not till this morn, the vale its robe of flowers,  
To feast mine eye alone, had seemed to wear ;  
Two gentle maidens oft in childhood’s hours,—  
In riper years,—had been my playmates there.

Resting my head upon my hand,  
I leant against a mossy stone,  
And wondered on what beauteous land  
The glorious light of heaven now shone;  
For my impatient glance could trace  
No cot, no sign of human race.  
I heard no voice;—the lark's glad lay  
Oft broke upon my listening ear,  
Hailing the sunny new-born day  
As when it saw no stranger near.  
Then suddenly there came once more  
A strain yet sweeter than before,  
Like airy music;—still and mute  
I listened to the joyous song,  
Which with the chords of the soft lute  
Was wafted merrily along.  
I knew not whose the hand could be  
That called forth such sweet melody,  
Or who the minstrel was;—the strain  
Was not the voice or touch of man;  
It ceased a moment, then again,  
In accents such as this it ran :

“Sisters ! to the merry-making,  
For our queen we crown to-day !  
All but pleasure's dreams forsaking,  
To the dance—away, away !

Weave a wreath of forest roses,  
Twine a garland bright and green :  
Onward ! onward ! she reposes  
Where no mortal step hath been.

Hand in hand before her kneeling,  
Gaze we on her beauteous face ;  
See her cheeks and eyes revealing  
Smiles a subject loves to trace.

Hasten then ! Oh, sorrows never  
Greet us on a morn like this ;  
Festive songs and music ever  
Are the harbingers of bliss.

Sisters ! to the merry-making,  
For our queen we crown to-day !  
All but joyous thoughts forsaking,  
To the dance—away, away !”

The voices ceased, and suddenly a throng  
Of laughing maidens left the sunny grove ;  
Each held her lute, and as she tripped along  
In her fair hands a wreath of flowers wove.

They danced upon the greensward round and round,  
Their arms entwining to the lute’s soft strain ;  
Each cast her wreath aloft, then gaily bound  
The garland o’er her beauteous brow again.

They sang their songs anew, and scarcely deigned,—  
So light their step,—to touch the flower-clad earth ;  
Methought they knew not that mine eye, enchained  
As by a spell, beheld their guileless mirth.

Soon they espied me, and returned again,  
And gathered round me, while my heart confessed  
To joy and wonder, which my lips in vain,  
In broken accents, to the group expressed.

I felt my cheek grow pale ;—they saw it too,  
But their kind words whiled all my fear away ;  
And with a smile, one asked me if I knew  
The reason of so joyous an array.

“ Alas, fair creature !” thus I low replied,  
“ I know not to what land my steps have strayed.”  
And as she whispered, “ I will be thy guide,”  
My eager glance fresh confidence betrayed.



“Thy feet have wandered far from earth ;  
Look round thee now ;—all is unknown !  
Thou art the first of mortal birth  
That ever ventured here alone.  
These trees and groves and forest flowers  
Were never planted by man’s hand,  
And rarely breath before but ours  
Drank in the fragrance of this land.  
We often meet at dewy eve,  
On grassy meadows known to thee,  
And dancing lightly o’er them leave  
Green wreaths to mark our gaiety ;  
But in those frolics none can trace  
Our flitting form or hiding-place.  
We are named fairies, and to-day  
Thou see’st us robed in white array ;  
This morning, all on pleasure bent,  
Thine eyes have viewed our festive scene ;—  
And know’st thou why this merriment ?  
We choose to-day the fairies’ queen.  
We crown not one of fairy birth,  
Nor weave these garlands for her brow ;  
No ! ’tis before some child of earth,  
Stranger, we ever humbly bow,—  
Some youthful maiden to whose cheek  
The blush of modesty doth start,  
Whose beaming eyes and glances speak  
The hidden fervour of the heart.  
A beauteous child we love to see,  
One whose bright smiles are ever new ;  
But she our queen could never be,  
Without a gentle spirit too.  
And we have borne two sisters now  
From earth away, linked hand in hand,  
And thou shalt say which maiden’s brow  
Shall wear the crown of Fairy-land.  
We cannot choose, for each one seems  
Beauteous alike to us, and true ;

Now hie we to them, lest in dreams  
Unconsciously they wander too !”

She ceased, and a bright beaming smile  
Played o’er each fairy’s cheek awhile ;  
And joyously they led the way  
Onward to undiscovered bowers,  
O’er meadows which, to grace that day,  
Were robed with fragrance-breathing flowers.  
At last, beneath a spreading tree,  
With heaven for their blue canopy,  
I saw two beauteous maids reclining  
Upon a grassy couch alone ;  
Their arms around each other twining,  
They seemed in thought and spirit one.  
And all was still ;—the fairies raised,  
With a light touch, the sleepers’ veil,  
And bending low, in silence gazed,  
Or whispering, told anew the tale.  
I stood transfixed, as though some spell  
Had drawn my footsteps to that bower,  
For my enraptured glances fell  
On playmates of a by-gone hour.

There is a beauty on which if we gaze,  
We feel the heart with deep emotion thrill,  
And for a moment, like the sun’s bright rays,  
It warms the bosom and enchains the will ;  
But when the first dream of delight is o’er,  
Though wonder fills the heart, love reigns no more !

Such beauty now mine eye looked not upon ;  
It was of gentler mould !—the evening star  
Owns not the splendour of the noon-day sun,  
Yet not less welcome its soft beamings are !

Fair was the elder sister, who scarce yet  
Had twenty summers seen :—oh ! well I knew  
That radiant smile again, nor could forget  
The gentleness that blessed her spirit too !

Hers was the beauty of the tranquil eve,  
 The hidden beauty of the murmuring rill ;  
 Her glance was like those meteors which leave  
 Their star-lit heaven when earth is calm and still.

I turned my gaze reluctantly away,  
 And saw her sister in yet tenderer youth ;  
 Upon whose cheek and laughing eyes there lay  
 The mantling blush of innocence and truth.

Hers was the beauty of the rosy dawn,  
 The joyousness that gilds the new-born day ;  
 Her glances sparkled, as at early morn  
 Glitters the dew-drop in the sun's first ray.

Around me soon the eager throng  
 Of fairies gathered, each to see  
 Her youthful queen, while a loud song  
 Burst from their lips unconsciously ;  
 And she who first had been my guide,  
 With noiseless step, came to my side.  
 Low at her feet I knelt, and thus  
 I spoke in accents tremulous :  
 "Sweet, gentle fairy! earth hath not  
 A purer or more spotless brow,  
 A soul more guileless than thy lot  
 Hath drawn unto thy bowers now.  
 Ask me no more;—oh, hadst thou sought  
 With eager glance the wide world round,  
 And on thy glittering pinions caught  
 All the fair things thine eyes had found  
 Scattered throughout earth, air, and sea,—  
 Think'st thou, of the two brightest gems,  
 That thy kind voice would ask of me  
 On which thy lasting choice should be,  
 If *both* were priceless diadems ?  
 Oh, no! and would'st thou have me say  
 Which of these sisters, who have been

Borne by thy fairy band away,  
Yon merry group shall hail their queen ?  
'Tis not for me,—these lips of mine  
Can but confess the choice is thine.  
Yet stay! each maiden seems so fair,  
So beauteous and in heart so true,—  
Oh, be not angry if I dare  
To speak with thee, sweet sprite of air,  
And counsel thee to crown the two!"

Oh, then methought upon my listening ear  
Soft music fell from the lute's chords again;  
My dream was o'er, yet faintly I could hear  
Voices far off once more renew the strain :

"Hie we to the merry-making,  
Hasten, sisters, and to-day  
All but joyous thoughts forsaking,  
To the dance—away, away !

Maids so beauteous who would sever,  
Maids so true in heart and hand ?  
Crown them, crown them now for ever,  
Queens of our bright 'Fairie-land !' "

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# WALLHAÏDE.

KÖRNER.



## A Ballad.

WHERE yonder stands a tottering wall

Upon the mountain's sun-lit brow,

Once rose a noble Ritter's hall,—

Alas ! a heap of ruins now.

The pitiless storm and wintry blast

Howl through each crumbling tower,

And voices whisper of the past

At each still midnight hour.

There dwelt a lord in days of yore,

In temper stern, in battle brave ;

To many, ere the fight was o'er,

His falchion bright their death-wound gave.

But like a ray from the sun above,

So beauteous and so mild,

So full of joy and peace and love,

Was Wallhaïde, his fair child.

In the household she performed her part,

Of the wide world she little knew ;

But one she loved whose inmost heart

To her was ever kind and true :

He awaits her in their secret bower,  
Ere the soft dews of evening fall ;  
And noiselessly leaves at that still hour  
Wallhaïde her banquet-hall.

How sweet to them are their fond dreams,  
Too bright, too exquisite to last !  
For they must part when the sun's beams  
No more around their radiance cast.  
Of future joys and future bliss,  
Of hopes in store they tell ;  
And then with many a lingering kiss  
They, weeping, bid farewell !

Fair summer came and went, and soon  
They loved too much to love alone ;  
Young Rudolph craved the wished-for boon,  
To call Wallhaïde his own.  
Before her father, side by side,  
They knelt, and prayed that he  
Would grant his child to be the bride  
Of one who loved thus tenderly.

Then spake the lord with knitted brow,  
" Rudolph, 'tis vain ! Wallhaïde never  
To thee shall breathe her bridal vow ;  
Ere the sun sets ye part for ever !  
A kinsman, rich in gold and land,  
Will wed her on the morrow ;  
Within this hall will claim her hand,  
Nor heed her tears and sorrow."

With bursting heart, with anguish wild,  
Young Rudolph turned aside, yet cast  
One glance upon the knight's fair child,  
Which pride thus doomed to be his last.  
Pale was his cheek, and cold the blood  
That flowed in his fond breast ;  
Wallhaïde lost !—his woe a flood  
Of burning tears expressed.

Suddenly, like a gleam of light,  
The thought broke in upon his brain,  
That she was not yet lost, but might  
Perchance be called his own again.  
He awaits her in their secret bower,  
Ere the soft dews of evening fall;  
And noiselessly leaves at that still hour  
Wallhaide her banquet-hall !

Said Rudolph, " Lady, at dead of night,  
When slumber reigns, my fleetest steed  
Shall bear us hence ;—our love-taught flight  
No treacherous eye shall see or heed.  
Thou shalt mount with me, and far away  
Our steed shall bear us on ;—  
Nay, weep not ! Ah, at break of day  
Our last hope will be gone !"

Upon his breast her throbbing brow  
Awhile as in despair was laid :  
" Rudolph, alas ! I know not how  
I can escape !" she softly said.  
" To leave at night my father's hall  
I need a magic spell ;  
Since at each window, tower, and wall,  
Stands a fierce sentinel.

" I know a charm that would bear me through,  
But a maiden's heart I fear would fail,  
If love, a thing so deep, so true,  
Were not her strength :—now hear my tale.  
Yet she who builds on love, I know,  
Its power hath not forsaken ;  
Not heights of bliss or depths of woe  
True love have ever shaken.

" Sir Wundehold dwelt long years ago  
Within these walls, fierce, lawless, wild ;  
And the pride of all, both high and low,  
Was his pensive and beauteous child.

Her name was Wallhaide too,  
And a knight in early youth  
Sought to win the heart, which well he knew  
Was tenderness and truth.

“ But though devotedly she loved,  
Unchangeable in woe or bliss,  
Her father, by her tears unmoved,  
Declared she never should be his.  
Am I not free?—is he not true?  
My chains may yet be broken;  
Oh, help me! ere I weep anew,  
Or my bridal vow be spoken!

“ A traitor’s tongue to her father’s ear  
The hapless maiden’s plan betrayed,  
And the blood of him she held so dear  
Was spilt beneath the assassin’s blade:  
While at eventide a prayer she breathed,  
Ere she sought her couch to rest,  
The same relentless dirk was sheathed  
Deep in her faithful breast.

“ Now her spirit oft shakes off the pall,  
And rising from her lonely bed,  
She nightly seeks in the banquet-hall  
The lover she longed in life to wed.  
She seeks him till day breaks o’er the plain;  
For the knight she holds so dear,  
To claim his long-lost bride again,  
She thinks will soon appear.

“ So long has she strayed, her bleeding breast  
In her crimson robe encircled still,  
All think her a harmless, a welcome guest,—  
She injures no one, none wish her ill:  
At her light step, now known so well,  
The gates are opened wide,  
And the fierce guard and sentinel  
Step readily aside!



“And as in life she dearly loved,  
So now, though no more life and air  
Are hers, she scarce will hear unmoved  
The breathings of a love-taught prayer ;  
Of her this night I’ll crave the boon  
To wear her blood-stained dress—  
The gates will open—I shall soon  
Forget my loneliness.

“Await me here ; and when the sound  
Of midnight falls from Sir Wundehold’s tower,  
With a crimson robe encircled round,  
Wallhaide will seek her lonely bower :  
Then, Rudolph, mount, and quickly bear  
My trembling form away ;  
Curb not thy fiery steed, nor dare  
Thine onward course delay !”—

“Oh, happy thought !” young Rudolph cried ;  
“And when we hail to-morrow’s dawn  
Thou’lt be my own, my tearless bride,  
No longer weeping and forlorn.  
What though the stars of heaven forget  
To shine upon our flight,  
Or smile on us but dimly, yet  
With thee there is no night !”

And long they linger, cheek to cheek :  
Hark ! there is heard the evening bell ;—  
He reins his steed, and hears her speak  
In accents sweet her last farewell :  
“Rudolph, to thee my heart is given,  
I am for ever thine ;  
No power a maiden’s love hath riven,  
Nor can extinguish mine !”

Soon night o’er earth her mantle cast,  
And many a star in heaven shone ;  
The warder sounds his parting blast,  
For the Ritter’s guest to his couch hath gone.

Ere yet the eleventh hour is spent,  
Rudolph, within the grove  
Hear'd by the frowning battlement,  
Waits the lady of his love !

He listens long. Hark ! the low sound  
Of midnight falls from Sir Wundehold's tower :  
With a crimson robe encircled round,  
Wallhaide seeks her silent bower.—  
One glance sufficed for thought and deed,  
The trembling maiden lay  
Within his arms ; he spurred his steed  
From the frowning pile away.

The hill is passed ; on, on they ride,  
The maiden's form bends o'er his knee :  
“ Thou art so light, methinks, sweet bride,  
A feather in weight surpasses thee ! ”  
And low to her lips his ear he bowed :—  
“ The robe I love to wear  
Is thin and light as the summer cloud  
That floats high in mid air ! ”

Now her arms are gently round him twined ;  
Chill flows his blood in every vein :  
“ Thou seemest cold as the wintry wind ;  
Doth love not rekindle thy soul again ? ”—  
“ In thine embrace 'tis warm, but cold,  
Companion, was my bed ;  
My couch was damp as is the mould  
By mortals tenanted ! ”

Dim grow the stars ;—o'er hill and dale  
Onward they rush with wild endeavour :  
“ Though outwardly, lady, so cold and pale,  
Beats thy heart not as fondly as ever ? ”—  
“ Rudolph, to thee my vows are given,  
I am for ever thine ;  
Time never yet love's power hath riven,  
Nor hath extinguished mine ! ”

Yet on they hurry ; dark grows the night,  
Black angry clouds above them hover :  
“ Oh, the rest that awaits me ! Oh, sweet delight !  
I have found my long-lost lover !  
Rudolph, to thee my heart is given,  
I am for ever thine ;  
Time never yet love's power hath riven,  
Nor hath extinguished mine !”

Slowly morning dawns, yet on they ride  
O'er hill and dale with headlong pace ;  
More silent and pale is now his bride,  
And colder her lips' embrace !  
Shrill crows the cock ; their flight is over ;—  
She stays their steed's fierce bound ;  
And wildly gazing on her lover,  
She hurls him to the ground.

And ice-cold lips to his are pressed,  
Chill are the arms that round him twine ;  
She whispers, as upon her breast  
His brow droops low, “Thou'rt mine ! thou'rt mine !”  
Wide gapes the earth !—that sod how dank !  
List to her latest breath :—  
“ Mine, mine for ever !” Back, back he sank,  
His dark eyes glazed in death !

---

## THE SINGER'S CURSE.

UHLAND.



In ancient times a castle stood upon the ocean's strand,  
Its glittering towers were seen by all who wandered through the land;  
Rich groves and gardens bloomed around, where fragrant flowers grew,  
And gushing fountains sported, tinged with every rainbow hue.

There, wrapped in gloom, a monarch sat pale on his lofty throne,  
And many a land and wide domain he proudly called his own;  
From every glance flashed anger forth, blood was in every thought,  
While rage and secret madness planned the cruel deeds he wrought!

Two noble minstrels to the pile once slowly made their way,  
The one had locks of auburn hue, the other's hair was gray;  
Holding his harp, upon his steed reclined the aged man,  
While joyously beside him his beauteous comrade ran.

The old man thus addressed the boy: "Be thou prepared, my son!  
Thy tenderest songs remember, and rehearse them one by one;  
So shall thy lips before the king not pour their hymn in vain,  
Perchance 'twill touch his stony heart ere we return again."

Soon stood the waiting minstrels humbly near the royal throne,  
On which reclined the monarch with his beauteous bride alone;  
The king in dazzling splendour robed, like the red northern light,  
The queen as mild and gentle as the cloudless summer night.

The old man softly struck the chords, and pleaded for the land ;  
Sweeter and sweeter grew the sounds beneath the master's hand ;  
Then to the music tremblingly flowed the youth's heavenly strain,  
The minstrel's deep notes mingling in the plaintive song again.

Hark ! they tell of spring and love, of the blessed golden days,  
Of honour, truth, and holiness, and freedom's glorious lays !  
They sing of every pleasure, too, whose power can pierce the breast,  
They sing of every hope and grace by which the heart is blest !

'Midst the crowd of haughty favourites hushed was the voice of mirth,  
The monarch's stubborn warriors humbly bowed themselves to earth ;  
Touched to the heart, the gentle queen wept tears of grief and joy,  
From her fair bosom plucked a rose and cast it to the boy.

"Thou hast betrayed my people, and wouldst beguile my bride !"   
Trembling with rage and fury, the angry monarch cried ;  
He hurled his glittering blade, like the lightning's flash it gleamed ;—  
From the boy's breast no song, but a crimson torrent streamed.

The listening crowd was scattered, like a tree before the storm ;  
The youth died, calmly leaning on his aged master's arm ;  
He cast his mantle round the lad as on the steed he lay,  
And having bound him to it, thence went on his dreary way.

Up to the castle's portals the aged minstrel moved,  
Then seized with trembling hand the harp so long, so dearly loved ;  
Hard by a marble pillar now his fingers sweep the strings,  
And with a voice of thunder thus to the dark pile he sings :

"Woe to ye fragrant gardens, kissed by the soft May-beam !  
Look ye on this distorted face, stained with a crimson stream ;  
That every shrub may wither soon, and every spring be dry,  
So man in days to come shall gaze, and pass thee—desert !—by.

Woe to thee, haughty palace, woe ! ne'er shall the voice of song,  
Or music's notes be heard again thy hollow space along ;  
No ! shrieks and sighs of anguish shall for ever echo there,  
Till vengeance cast thee down, and give thy dust unto the air.

Woe to thee, ruthless murderer ! thou curse of minstrelsy !  
Vain, vain shall all thy wrestling for a wreath of honour be ;  
Thy name, unhonoured, shall be lost—hid in eternal night,  
And as a dream that vanisheth, shall ne'er be brought to light."

Such words the aged minstrel spoke, nor uttered them in vain,—  
Those walls are mouldering ruins, those high towers are rent in twain ;  
But one huge pillar stands to tell a tale of splendour past,  
And this hath burst asunder, and must crumble too at last.

Now, instead of fragrant gardens, 'tis a waste desert land,  
No tree there shades the wanderer, no spring flows through the sand ;  
No chronicle, no minstrel doth that murderer's name rehearse,  
A ruined pile, a name unknown—*this* is the singer's curse !

---

## TO MY COUNTRY.

### UHLAND.

---

Songs would my pen indite to thee,  
Beloved German fatherland !  
To thee unshackled, honoured, free,  
Fain would I turn with heart and hand.

But noble blood for thee hath flowed,  
To thee youth gave its brightest days ;  
With such an offering, thus bestowed,  
How weak were even my loftiest lays !

---

## THE MONK AND THE SHEPHERD.

UHLAND.



MONK.

WHY art thou wrapped in silent grief?  
O shepherd, answer me;  
My heart from sorrow seeks relief,  
Thus it can feel for thee.

SHEPHERD.

And dost thou ask me?—look around,  
Behold my own loved vale;  
No shrub, no blossom can be found,  
No flower on hill or dale.

MONK.

Dost thou complain?—thy bitterest grief  
Is but a passing dream;  
Soon shall spring forth the tender leaf  
Beneath the sun's bright beam.  
Then round the cross at which I kneel  
Green buds and flowers will twine;  
But, oh! 'twill bear an image still,  
And tell of one who suffered ill,  
Shepherd, surpassing thine!

---

## THE DYING HEROES.

### UHLAND.



THE Danish swords had driven Sweden's host  
To the wild sea-coast ;  
Their chariots rattle, and their lances gleam  
In the pale moonbeam ;  
The beauteous Swen, and Ulf with years grown gray,  
Dying, upon the field of battle lay.

#### SWEN.

O father ! would that Normè could restore  
My strength once more !  
My mother's hand no more shall smooth the hair  
She once called fair.  
She who sang to me, from her tower, in vain  
Shall gaze in silence o'er her wide domain.

#### ULF.

Yes, they will mourn ;—their nightly dream will be  
The thought of thee.  
Yet weep thou not !—their hearts for thy dear sake  
With grief will break ;  
Then shall they both at Odin's banquet sup,  
And, smiling, there present the foaming cup !

#### SWEN.

I had begun, to the harp's soft sound, a song  
Of the bright throng  
Of kings and heroes who in days gone by  
Learnt love and chivalry.  
The winds alone now sadly wake the strain,  
These fingers ne'er shall strike its chords again.



ULF.

It hangeth on our common Father's throne,  
Above the sun ;  
The stars are far beneath it, and the wind  
Is left behind.  
There, with thy fathers, shall we feast in peace,  
There shalt thou sing thy hymn ;—'twill never cease !

SWEN.

O father ! would that Nornè could restore  
My strength once more !  
No noble deeds as yet upon my shield  
Have been revealed :  
Twelve judges there methinks look sternly down,  
Nor count me worthy of a hero's crown.

ULF.

There is one deed, surpassing all the rest ;  
'Tis there confessed,—  
When for his country and his native ties  
The warrior dies :  
The foe is vanquished, heaven serene and fair  
Points to our path ;—look up ; our home is there !

---

## THE CHAPEL.

UHLAND.

---

SEE yon chapel softly smiling  
On the dimpled vale below,  
Where a child, his hours beguiling,  
Watches a bright streamlet flow.

Slowly, hark ! a bell is ringing,  
And he hears a wailing sound ;  
Ceased is now his joyous singing,  
Mournfully he looks around.

She who often sported gladly  
At his side, hath ceased to be ;—  
Soon the bell that rings thus sadly,  
Shepherd-boy, may ring for thee !

---

## A DREAM.

UHLAND.

---

METHOUGHT my steps had strayed  
To a wild and craggy height  
Beside the ocean's strand,  
Whence many a distant land  
And the sea burst on my sight.

A ship near the coast beneath  
Rocked in the gentle gale ;  
A flag of varied hue  
Waved from the mast ; I knew  
That she was soon to sail.

Then onward from the mountains  
A troop came merrily,  
And glittering like a throng  
Of angels, sped along  
With music to the sea.

Before the group a crowd  
Of laughing children came ;  
While others, goblets swinging,  
Flowers wildly flinging,  
Joined in each dance and game.

They thus addressed the captain :  
“ Wilt thou conduct us hence ?  
We are earth's joys and pleasures,  
And what she calls her treasures,  
And we would wander thence.”

He welcomed to his ship  
Earth's pleasures—her delights ;  
Then whispered, “ Children, say  
Have none remained away  
In the vale or on the heights ?”

They cried, “ Haste, haste away ;  
Make sail, we all are here !”  
A brisk wind blew,—earth's bliss,  
Her joys, her happiness,—  
I soon saw disappear !

# THE DEATH-WARNING, THE CHAPEL, AND THE TOMB.

C. O. STERNAU.

(WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF CARL MARIA VON WEBER.)



## 1. THE DEATH-WARNING.

In his chamber, still and pensive,  
Sat the master long alone ;  
Visions bright by genius kindled  
Round his brow in radiance shone.

From those chords what sounds are given !  
Sweet as minstrel's happiest lay ;  
Soaring proudly now to heaven,  
Dying softly now away.

'Tis a strain that tells of parting,  
Seems to whisper low, " Good night !"  
Sad 'tis now, a tear-drop starting  
From the eye no longer bright.

Louder now the strain is swelling,  
Towards the master, see, a child  
Slowly wanders, like those dwelling  
In the skies, so fair and mild.

Thus he lisps, in accents trembling,  
" Stay with us, we hold thee dear !"  
And the boy's lament resembling,  
Grow the notes more sad and drear.

Still his hands the chords are sweeping,  
Waking a new melody ;  
'Tis no more the sound of weeping,  
'Tis the murmuring of the sea.

Listens yet the child in wonder,  
But with gaze no longer bright ;—  
Hark ! a chord hath burst asunder,  
And the boy speaks low, " Good night ! "

Towards Albion's shores, with ardour turning,  
Forth the master wanders now ;  
New undying laurels earning,  
Wreathed around his pensive brow.

From native hills and dales a ranger,  
Quits he his loved fatherland ;  
And a home awaits the stranger  
On a distant foreign strand.

Soft evening falls ;—his couch surrounding,  
List ye to those melodies ;  
Hark, how sweet the strains resounding  
From a master-hand like his !

Unchanged, as when with like devotion  
He woke them in his fatherland ;  
Save that from absence, deep emotion  
Unnerves the firmness of his hand.

'Tis a strain that tells of parting,  
Seems to whisper low, " Good night ! "  
Sad 'tis now, a tear-drop starting  
From the eye no longer bright.

Louder now the strain is swelling,  
Towards the master, see, a child  
Once more wanders, like those dwelling  
In the skies, so fair and mild.

Thus he lisps, in accents trembling,  
    " Oh, why dwell so long away !"  
And the boy's lament resembling,  
    Trembles too the minstrel's lay.

Still the heavenly strain is flowing  
    Smoothly as the rippling stream ;  
Louder yet and louder growing,  
    Waking from its troubled dream.

Still the master's notes are pealing,  
    Cease not through the long still night ;  
Tales of bliss and woe revealing,  
    Till the darkness melts to light.

From those chords what sounds are given !  
    Sweet as minstrel's happiest lay ;  
Soaring proudly now to heaven,  
    Dying softly now away.

'Tis hushed ! 'tis hushed ! the beams of morning  
    Their radiance through the casement shed ;  
The bright sun rises ;—his first dawning  
    Finds the master cold and dead !

Ceased each note,—the child in wonder  
    Listens yet, with gaze less bright ;  
Hark ! a chord hath burst asunder,  
    And the boy speaks low, " Good night !"

## II. THE CHAPEL.

TOWARDS Moorfields' silent chapel, in sombre gloom arrayed,  
Slowly, with wavering step, a young and weary pilgrim strayed ;  
Love, faithful love, had drawn him far from his native land,  
To seek his father laid to rest upon a foreign strand.

Through each dark vault he wanders,—in each a glance he throws,  
 No word he utters lest he break the sleepers' sweet repose ;  
 And while in solemn stillness he wends his dreary way,  
 He sees around an altar a golden sunbeam play.

Now through the lofty casement a purple stream of light  
 Illumes a humble corner—dispels the gloom of night ;  
 It shews a narrow coffin, 'midst flowers once sweet and fair ;  
 The pilgrim softly nears it, and kneels in silence there.

Trembling, he leans upon the lid his hands refuse to raise ;  
 'Tis done ! in bitterest anguish he sinks his tearful gaze :  
 And angels whisper, as around a lingering glance he throws,  
 " Thy father sleeps, tread lightly ! break not his sweet repose ! "

He drops the swarthy covering ; his thoughts to heaven rise  
 In prayer ; and now he dashes the tear-drop from his eyes ;  
 The chapel-door he closes, then wanders forth again,—  
 Above are brightly shining the pale moon and starry chain !

### III. THE TOMB.

A SHIP sails on the ocean—the pilgrim stands alone,  
 And gazes on the waters as the bark glides lightly on ;  
 Upon his staff reclining, he rests his trembling hand,  
 On a narrow house beside him, borne from a distant land.

Joy flushes every bosom ;—" Land ! " eager voices cry ;  
 The pilgrim's breast responds with a smile and with a sigh ;  
 The anchor falls : the coffin his faithful hands once more  
 Clasp round, and bear it gently to his own verdant shore

Through meads and smiling landscapes, onward by night and day  
 A mourning cavalcade pursues its long and dreary way ;  
 Emotions deep and fervent glow within the pilgrim's breast  
 He thinks of home and kindred ;—seeks not, cares not for re

Too slowly for his ardent heart the cavalcade moves on,  
Around all speaks of happier days ;—alas ! now past and gone !  
A woman stands beside him ;—he soothes and calms her fears,  
And on her bosom leaning, kisses away her tears.

Where tranquil waters mingle like a pure silver band,  
The Elbe's stream encircles the Saxon's beauteous land ;  
The pilgrim stays the cavalcade ; how throbs his faithful breast,  
As by a humble altar's side at length the mourners rest !

And smiling gardens now cast their shade around the tomb,  
Wild flowers of sweetest fragrance upon the tablet bloom ;  
A woman's hand hath planted them ;—two children at her side,  
A pilgrim kneeling with them, weep here at eventide !

Who sleeps beneath this tablet ? his dirge the cool night wind !  
Carl Maria von Weber ! the noble master-mind ;  
Whose fame unshipwrecked stands, though on Time's rude billows hurled,  
Whose strains of magic sweetness yet charm a grateful world !





## THE SEA OF HOPE.

---

HOPE followeth hope, but though its light be gone,  
The heart, unchanged, still ever hopeth on ;  
As wave o'er wave breaks everlastingly,  
Yet takes not from the fulness of the sea.

Yes ! the deep murmur, the tumultuous strife  
Of each wild wave, seemeth the ocean's life ;  
So are the hopes, from which I would not part,  
The living waves that beat upon my heart.

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